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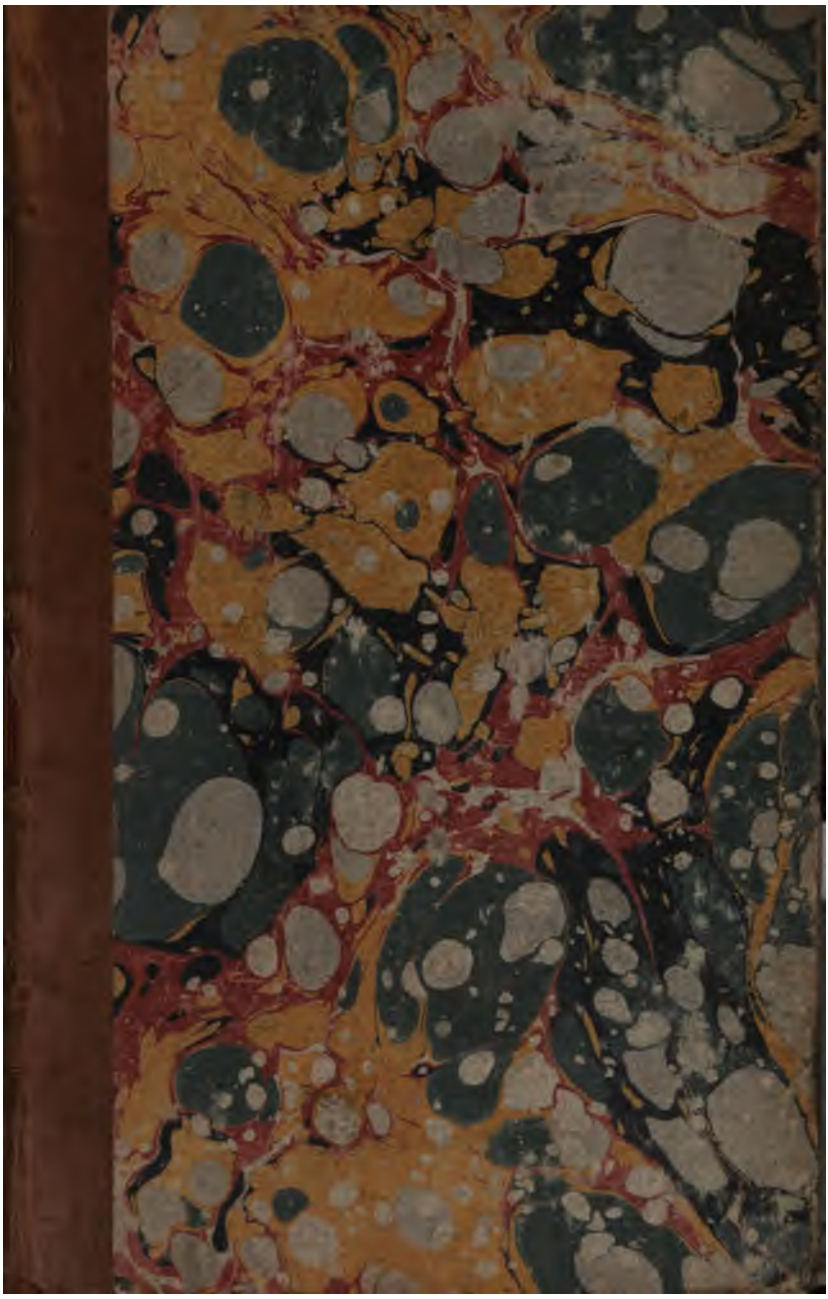

James Boswell Esqr

THE

MISTAKES OF THE HEART:

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF

LADY CAROLINA PELHAM

AND

LADY VICTORIA NEVIL.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

PUBLISHED BY

M. TREYSSAC DE VERGY,
Counſellor in the Parliaments of Paris and Bourdeaux.

At feeling hearts I fling, nor ever miſs the game.

PRIOR.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
Printed for J. MURDOCH in the STRAND.
M DCC LXIX.

249. S. 473.

DEDICATION.

To M. J. J. ROUSSEAU, Citizen of GENEVA.

HAD I choſen to dedicate my novel to a man of rank, hundreds had I eaſily found weak enough to thank me for praiſes, the more welcome the leſs they are deſerved: but their's had been the honour, mine the diſgrace. I was too proud to miſtake. I looked for a man whoſe eſteem ſhould be my glory. You are the man my ambition pointed out to me—the man whoſe virtues, talents and de-

delicacy,

licacy, called aloud for my public homage. Deign, Sir, to accept it as the tribute of my reſpect and admiration.

THE AUTHOR.

London, March 1769.

THE

EDITOR

TO THE

PUBLIC.

THE real merit of theſe memoirs, not my regard for their author, has induced me to publiſh them.

Friendſhip ſhall never biaſs my judgment, when I may forfeit the public eſteem by obeying her calls.

I wiſh the author had been as chaſte in ſome of his pictures, as he has been delicate in his ſentiments, happy in his converſations, ſkilled

ſkilled in the human heart: but was he wrong to follow nature, to write what he felt, to repreſent mankind as they are?—I cannot, will not, ſay he was.

I have read this novel, ſometimes with the cool eye of a critic, ſometimes with the inflamed ſoul of a lover. Reaſon now and then objected, but paſſion was ever pleaſed.

What ſhall I ſay of the ſprightlineſs of Carolina—of the ingenuity of Victoria—of the wanderings of Lady Belmour and Sir John Modiſh?—What ſhall I ſay!—Ye critics, ſilence!—They have pleaſed me. Every impartial bel-eſprit, *every feeling heart, will eccho—"they have pleaſed me."*

There were ſeveral letters of Lord Pelham—but ſo unmercifully virtuous, they would have yawned the fair and the gay into as ſound a

nap

nap as the Journals of Pamela Andrews to her Dear Father and Mother. *I have likewiſe curtailed the correſpondence of my favourite Victoria—was I right? I know not.*

If faults againſt language occur—wonder there are ſo few—the author is a foreigner.

* * * * * * * * *

La critique eſt aiſée, et l'art eſt difficile.

TREYSSAC DE VERGY.

The two laſt Volumes are ready for the Preſs.

A Book without a preface, like a fine woman in a modeſt dreſs, will hardly pleaſe in this age of refinement. Wit and beauty the ſlaves of faſhion! ridiculous! Give me a girl of eighteen, graced with her own charms; give me a Clariſſa, and my heart and my eyes will feel and enjoy. What need have I of fictitious ornaments?—to heighten my deſires? Pſhaw! Talk not of art when youth and curioſity pant but for nature.

I have a copy of the Venus of Medicis, ſays one to me.—Have you? Let me ſee it—and I hurry him to his cloſet. He ſtops in the firſt room, and attempts a deſcription—a deſcription!—A preface and the graces of the toilet are juſt that deſcription—damn them all.

THE AUTHOR.

MEMOIRS

OF

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM,

AND

Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

****

LETTER I.

Lady VICTORIA NEVIL to Lady CAROLINA PELHAM.

HERE has been a meteor, Carolina; a meteor which ſhone ſo bright, and radiant, that our eyes were almoſt dazzled with it. It came from London, and ſtopped for a fortnight in Cumberland: its motions were ſo quick and rapid, that it

ſeemed in twenty places at once. Very likely, what was ſo new, and ſo peculiarly ſtriking to us, is quite familiar to you; London furniſhes more than one of theſe phenomenons; and Sir JOHN MODISH is not the only man who has exchanged nature for art, and ſenſe for wit. ——How we looked and ſtared at the embroidered fluttering beau!——How people crowded about him when he appeared in public!—— Neither Lord B**e, nor the illuſtrious Orator P***, nor even the ſpirited W***es, have ever attracted the attention of the fools of England in ſo eminent a degree.—Theſe are not ſuch unparalleled oddities in politics, as Sir JOHN is really in civil ſociety.—We were, I believe, the firſt who were favoured with a ſight of the delicate, elegant, and chearful creature. He waited on us at Brenton-hall, and complimented me with a courtly

courtly bow, and a conſcious air of his dear ſelf-importance. His tongue was ſo ready for flattery, and his lips for ſmiling approbation, that I durſt hardly venture a word, or ſteal a look at him. He begged the favour of my hand at our next ball at Carliſle; but aſſuring him, it was engaged to Mr. FROSBY, he, on a ſudden, hummed a tune — danced his diſappointment away—and took his leave.—To have Sir John for a partner! Could any thing be more inviting, more glorious, more *à propos* to raiſe the vanity of a country girl! ——Why did I keep my word, and refuſe the high honour Sir JOHN deigned to confer upon me? Since I have diſregarded this uncommon opportunity, I am afraid I ſhall ever be the thoughtleſs VICTORIA, who knows not how to ridicule modeſty in a man's behaviour, and eſteem and commend foppery and impertinence.

'Tis

'Tis very lucky, CAROLINA, I am at ſuch a diſtance from London, where, indulged in my unfaſhionable prejudices, I am at liberty to deteſt vice and folly, without the fear of ſatire and contempt. Let not a ſoul know of my exiſtence: let me live only for my CAROLINA and FROSBY. Adieu.

Benton-hall, Feb. 7, 176-.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

HOW came you, dear VICTORIA, not to be moſt agreeably entertained with Sir JOHN's lively converſation, and prefer to him the modeſt, and plain Mr. FROSBY? Have you neither vanity, nor ſelf-love? Is not my VICTORIA aſhamed to glory in a virtuous lover, when in oppoſition to a courtier, ſo highly celebrated for his taſte and brilliancy of wit? You dare openly to declare, that decency and morals are the only amiable and eſſential qualities in a man, when the whole world riſe in defence of gallantry, intrigue, and perfidy! —— How Lady PRESTON, and Lady COQUET will exclaim againſt ſuch a novelty!

novelty! How they will ſneer when I ſhall whiſper them that Sir JOHN is not to be praiſed for being young, handſome, rich—and the very pink of coxcombs! —— I am at a loſs, VICTORIA, how to juſtify ſuch an extraordinary proceeding. What can I ſay?—Come—let me ſee.—I could—No: it won't do—This will do better—better! How!——I'll ſo rack my brains —— Have we no inſtance of a *petit-maître* left off for—for what?——The character is ſo old,——or ſo new,——that there is hardly an expreſſion to——O! I'll find it out.—Yes, yes, I have it; for *a man of ſenſe*. Is not this a pretty word, VICTORIA?—How frightful would be the ſound of it in a polite *drum!*—How exquiſitely odious to a faſhionable lady!——Well, have we no ſuch inſtance to produce in your ladyſhip's favour?——Where ſhall I look for it?—At court?—In the city?—

Where

Where *ſhall* I look for it, VICTORIA?—Had you really this particular way of thinking, loving, and behaving,——how jealous I ſhould be! The delightful thing, to be ſpoken of in the drawing-room, and at every *rout*, as a yet unſeen piece of nature!—to fix upon one's ſelf every eye and every tongue!——Oh! let the manner be ever ſo out of the way, it muſt be above the expectations of the proudeſt heart.—Who could reſiſt the temptation, when attended with ſo much glory!—But—but —How many buts againſt the thirſty ſoul panting after fame and diſtinction!—Had you wiſdom, talents, and beauty, united to the moſt refined, enchanting degree—Were you unrivalled for grace and wit,—Could you with a word, or a ſmile, force all men to your feet, and throw them into raptures——even then, VICTORIA, you ſhould be the object of malice and diſcontent—

tent—Even then, you ſhould be railed at by your moſt ſanguine admirers.

'Tis not in our borrowed exiſtence to applaud virtues we are deprived of: far from being inclined to acknowledge a ſuperiority, which humbles our pride, we are always ready to repreſent it in an odious and deſpicable light. Slander, VICTORIA, is a weapon truſted in our hands, by faſhion and pleaſure, to oppoſe the bold ſpirits that preſume to lead us into the ſolitary paths of honour and decency. The reaſon of a few individuals has been, is, and ever ſhall be, drowned amidſt the clamours of the multitude. The general cry being for the folly in faſhion, whoever diſregards it, is treated as a common enemy, and dangerous innovator.

How

How happy is a private ſtation in life!—How happy that poſition in which we are free from the laſh of mode and criticiſm!—What do I ſay! Is there any happineſs where it is not felt? Is there any poignancy of taſte, when obſtacles interfere not between paſſions and the object we eagerly ſeek after? — To be compelled to wander over buſhes and thorns, before we ſhelter in the bewitching arbour of peace and voluptuouſneſs! —— Killing thought, VICTORIA!——Adieu! adieu! Continue to love FROSBY—to laugh at faſhion—and to believe me yours forever.

London, February, 176-.

CAROLINA.

LETTER III.

MUST I be eternally tormented by Lord CHARLES FANFLY —— that Lord CHARLES, VICTORIA, who is the moſt ſteadily tedious, and provoking man upon earth! No change, though ever ſo trifling, appears in his underſtanding; and to-morrow he will do me the favour of the ſame impertinent converſation, with which he has daily vexed me to death, ever ſince I have been acquainted with his cringing, unthinking lordſhip. This is the man whom my father ordered me to love, and to reſpect, tho' my reaſon tells me he deſerves to be hated, and deſpiſed.

Was I of a coquettiſh diſpoſition, the man would do well enough for a huſband, of whom, no more is now required than titles, riches, and indifference: but as I intend

intend to have one who will chat, fret, and rave in a lively ſtrain, and whom I can prattle into fondneſs; I want a more witty companion to wait upon me to the temple of Hymen. I don't mean, dear VICTORIA, to be paſſionately in love, and to turn mad upon my huſband's ſmiles: no! no! I do not pretend to that ſupreme bliſs; a lower rank in the terreſtrial happineſs will ſatisfy my ambition.

I have always obſerved, dear VICTORIA, that nothing tempts a lady more into ſociety, than the having no amuſements at home; that want is the principal cauſe of the many falſe ſteps, paſſions, and littleneſſes which diſtract, and ruin a family. What can one do with a fool, who will neither divert, nor be diverted; who will (without mercy) tell you over, and

over

over again, the childiſh tales he has learnt from his nurſe, or from his even leſs rational governor; who will be continually ſpeaking about horſes, dogs, and his follies at Newmarket and White's?—Is not our head vapouriſhly affected by the unwelcome repetition; and are not we juſtly enticed to order the coach, and gallop away to a friend for pleaſure and comfort.

My father loved me to exceſs! and he could be ſo unjuſt as to command I ſhould marry the ſon of his intimate friend Lord FANELY, or forfeit thirty thouſand pounds, which he left to my brother, in caſe I oppoſed his will!——— He did not ſurely intend I ſhould be the wretchedeſt of women.—Could a father ——No! no! it would be a crime to obey, when my ſubmiſſion would plunge

me

me into the deepeſt miſery. ——— He thought I ſhould love, and that Lord FANFLY deſerved to enter into his family, otherwiſe he would not have entailed upon his daughter the horrours, and vexations attending a forced, and deteſted engagement. —— I'll never be Lady FANFLY. —— What have I not to hope from the tendereſt of mothers, and from a brother who has ſo high a friendſhip for me? ——— I would hate, next to deformity, to bluſh for a man who ſhould have been my choice, to the everlaſting diſhonour of my taſte and delicacy. —— Poor CHARLES! He loves me ſo heartily! —— Then he looks ſo! —— Were his ſoul as ſublime, and his tongue as eloquent as his eyes are expreſſive! ——— Adieu.

London, Feb. 176-.

LETTER;

LETTER IV.

WAS I a man, dear VICTORIA, I would kneel, kiſs your hands, and tell you devoutly, I adore you: —I would kneel, kiſs, and adore again, and again.—What a charming creature! How ſincere! how ingenuous!—What man deſerves ſo much innocence and virtue!—Does the happy FROSBY, who made you ſing his praiſes; who firſt taught you to love, and to expreſs it, know all the value of your charms, and the ſenſibility of your heart?—Can he ſee, and hear you, without the utmoſt complacency, and delight? Is he not loſt in the contemplation of ſo much excellence? and are not his eyes the ſeat of love, and enchanting confuſion?——How aweful is the preſence of beauty!——What troubles does it not cauſe in a lover's breaſt

breaſt when indifferent,——what raptures when pleaſed!

As often as I conſider the many loving thoughts, which a retirement in the country inſpires us with, as often do I feel a half regret to have been three whole years drudging at St. James's, for the mere ambition of attracting applauſe, regards and admiration.

Had I never been out of Pelham-hall, I ſhould have had my FROSBY, my birds, my bed of tulips, and my parrot.—What bewitching amuſements! FROSBY would have told me fine things, and taught them to the parrot, that I might be conſtantly entertained with love and flattery. "How handſome! how witty! how graceful!"——would have attended every viſit, and, perhaps, every period——And then,

FROSBY

FROSBY the next day—and always FROSBY ——at dinner, in the garden, at cards,—to be ſure I ſhould have been perpetually ſighing when alone, and ſmiling, and enchanted when with him: — charming life! But as the converſation of a young lady, out of a faſhionable circle, is generally limited within a very narrow compaſs, I do not conceive how FROSBY, let him have ever ſo ſprightly an imagination, could have helped betraying me at laſt into a perfect indifference, if not a total diſlike.

I have always taken a diſguſt to my moſt favourite tunes when play'd three times over —Why ſhould it not be the ſame with reſpect to the melodious words, "I love you, nobody walks, talks, dances, ſings, and does any thing ſo ſweetly, and raviſhingly as you"?—— Is my heart better diſpoſed

poſed for ſentiment than my ear for harmony?—How could I aſcertain the ſuperiority of an HANDEL, and a FROSBY, if neither a PINCINI, nor a Lord FANFLY ever came in my way to enhance their value, by the ſtriking diſſimilitude of their merit and talents?

When our heads are heated with a pleaſing idea, we delight in deluding ourſelves; and I am not ſurpriſed, dear VICTORIA, that your heart ſhould be ſo far deceived, ſince nobody has yet ſhewn you the proſpect of a new, and more lively paſſion.—I could lay my life, that your heart is at reſt though you feel it in a flame.—How are you ſure you love, having never had an opportunity to hate?—Even from your infancy, has not every one been anxious to pleaſe you? Had you ever a deſire which was not applauded, and gratified?

With

With tender parents, and indulgent friends, how could you be acquainted with pride, envy, jealouſy, and the other foibles inſeparable from ſociety, and a worldly education?—Were Sir JOHN MODISH, and Mr. FROSBY, in the drawing-room, and every diſtinction confined to the former—vanity, vanity, my ſweet and modeſt VICTORIA, would add a beautiful roſe to your bloomy cheeks, and enlighten you on the miſtakes of your heart. I do not ſay you would love Sir JOHN, but ten to one the ſlighted FROSBY would ſink in your eſteem.

We do not know ourſelves till intereſt and paſſion force us to the enquiry. Led in a peaceful country life, by cuſtom and habit, we love as we eat, ſing, and walk: a partridge there, as well as a lover, can hardly create an unfelt ſenſation.—You will laugh at my incredulity, VICTORIA; and

and FROSBY ſhall be the better loved for my not thinking him ſo.——With all my heart: but—have a care not to put it in my power to recriminate. Adieu.

London, Feb. 176-.

LETTER

LETTER V.

LADY COQUET and I went yeſterday to the Green-Park, where we had not been ten minutes, before we met with Sir JOHN MODISH, in a riding dreſs.

"He had juſt diſmounted to have a glance at the Ladies, and was tired, almoſt to annihilation."

Have you had any news from Cumberland, Lady CAROLINA? How does the heavenly VICTORIA do?

She is very well, Sir JOHN.

And then, forgetting he was over-fatigued, he chatted with ſuch velocity, and fire, in praiſe of the beloved girl, that being afraid he ſhould drop down

at

at our feet, Lady COQUET preſented him with her ſalts. I could not help laughing, to hear Sir JOHN ſwear by his VICTORIA, that they could not come more *à propos*, for his ſtrength wonderfully decayed whenever he ſpoke of the Beauty who had enſlaved him. —— He ſaid it was a downright murder, that a young lady of your rank and merit ſhould be buried in Cumberland, when ſhe might be a toaſt in Town. He complained of Lord NEVIL, who ſacrificed his moſt amiable daughter.

Sacrifice! Sir JOHN—Is not Mrs. BRENTON's immenſe fortune a ſatisfactory compenſation for Lady VICTORIA's attendance upon her aunt? ———

Certainly it would be ſo, was not Lady VICTORIA left entirely to the will, and diſpoſal

diſpoſal of Mrs. BRENTON: But pray, Lady CAROLINA, conſider what a loſs to the court, if ſhe ever — ſurely, FROSBY cannot be the man. ———

Why not? Is not Mr. FROSBY of an illuſtrious family, and a man of character? ———

Of character! Of character, Lady CAROLINA! A man who has no intereſt at court, a man of character! A man whoſe name is hardly mentioned twenty miles out of his own manor, a man of character! Has he once poſted to Newmarket, or taken a trip to France, and Italy? Who ever ſaw him at Almack's or Soho? And that man, Lady CAROLINA! — that man, a man of character! — I commend an honeſt citizen, who goes now and then to laviſh his profits in the *beau monde* at Paris, but

a FROSBY, who never faſhioned his clothes, his table, his countenance, in the modern taſte, *ſur mon honneur, un tel homme eſt pitoiable.* ——

Lady COQUET aſked whether his rival ——

My rival, Lady COQUET! my rival! ——

I beg pardon, Sir JOHN—Do you believe Mr. FROSBY has already inſpired Lady VICTORIA with a tender prepoſſeſſion.—

I am not yet determined what to think of it, Lady COQUET; for, tho' I have the moſt exalted idea of Lady VICTORIA's delicacy, I am ſometimes forced into a belief of an intimacy between them. Lady VICTORIA imbibed both her reaſon, and inclinations at Brenton-hall. The neighbourhood allowing FROSBY's viſits, a ſociety was formed:——That love has intruded

truded unawares on their hearts, under the name and ſanction of friendſhip, is what I ſuſpect——and what I will not believe.——At the laſt ball at Carliſle, I aſked her hand; but, to my unſpeakable chagrin, it had been promiſed. FROSBY was her partner; and, as I learnt, he always was ſo.—There is no concluding, there was love in her choice.

Neither muſt you conclude there was none, ſaid Lady COQUET, that is in the claſs of probabilities: beſides, I imagine there was a neceſſity for Lady VICTORIA to diſpoſe of her heart, to embelliſh the horrours of her wilderneſs. What would have become of her had ſhe had no lover to trifle away with the many tedious hours that lay upon her hands? She had neither a Ranelagh, nor a Play-houſe:——Could ſhe always read, meditate, walk, ſing, and pray?

pray? Her heart, ſurely, wanted as much diverſion as her head; and FROSBY being the only man, who ſighed, courted, and flattered, who had inceſſant opportunities to amuſe and to pleaſe, how ſhould their attachment to each other be a prodigy?—

A very great one, Lady COQUET, one of the moſt marvellous kind. 'Tis the unconſtrained familiarity of their viſits, which prompts me to think, that, unknown to themſelves, they are captivated by the deluſions of ſentiment, and ſubjected to the faſcinations of fancy.— Expreſſions of fondneſs, like ſmart repartee, may inchant by their novelty— but how quickly do their charms vaniſh when they are frequently repeated!

Were one of you, Ladies, and a fine gentleman, to break in upon Lady VICTORIA and Mr. FROSBY, they might poſ-

bly, for a week or two, humour the deception, from habit or vanity; but believe me, the firſt fortnight over, our lovers would neceſſarily awake to the ambition or pleaſure of conquering a new heart.

Lady COQUET, inſiſting on his not loving you, ſince he was not jealous, he ſwore, by the ſacred name of Liberty, that he loved you more ſincerely than PITT ever loved a peerage.

"It is his *immenſe* reſpect for Lady VICTORIA, that hinders him from fearing a competitor like"—you may gueſs whom.

The man has ſuch a fund of ſelf-love!—he is really handſome, and truly elegant—but ſuch a pride!—Were his heart as miſ-

chievous

chievous as it is bold, what would not my VICTORIA have to dread!—That the ſame power which formed thee equally virtuous, ſenſible, and fair, may ſtill protect thee, is the daily wiſh of thy CAROLINA. Adieu.

London, — 176—.

LETTER VI.

I Cannot conceive, dear VICTORIA, how it happens, but I am ſo penſive to-day, and ſo abſent——Is it from the weather, my natural temper, or the converſation of my viſitors, that my ſpirits are thus oppreſſed?—— What *can* be the cauſe of my being ſo very different from myſelf?

The gay, the chearful CAROLINA, thoughtful, without knowing the "Why!" and the "How!" Lord Charles?— he did not ſpeak.——Sir James?—he ſung well.——The day is fine——I am well—what's the matter with me then?

I went laſt night to the Suſpicious Huſband— there was, in the adjoining box—

What

What then ?——does my melancholy proceed from that box ?----Could a comely ſtranger, though ever ſo engaging, give me a moment's uneaſineſs ?---He looked--- he ſpoke--- was delicate--- artleſsly graceful---How could all that take my gaiety away ?---If it is not that, what is it then ? Cannot you help me, dear VICTORIA ?---You, who are ſo uſed to ſigh, and to love,---and to love and to tell, cannot you gueſs, whether there is any ſymptom of your rapturous ſenſibility in me ?

CAROLINA in love !----- With whom, pray ?--- With a man ſhe never ſaw before, whom ſhe may chance never to ſee again !---Incredible, incredible---I'll take my guitar and play that thought away.

Lady PRESTON, who accompanied me to the play, inſiſted, the whole night, that my eyes had been oftener upon that box, than upon the incomparable GARRICK---Fooliſh girl !---How weak we are, VICTORIA !---Who could imagine that our hearts ſhould thus pant, and flutter at a firſt-ſight!---GARRICK played Ranger, and I forgot he did !---Oh ! my guitar, my guitar———

My guitar is as much out of order as my head---My fingers and my voice have loſt their wonted vivacity.

"Se non è amor, ch'è dunque quel ch'io ſento?"

None of your laughs, ſweet VICTORIA, none of your laughs : pity your CAROLI-

NA,

NA, and if you can tell her what ails her---do it—do it immediately.

Tell me not of love---Of love did I ſay?---Let not the bewitching ſound reach and pleaſe the ear of the indifferent, happy CAROLINA.——Could it be in any man's power---No: often as I have yielded to the deluſive calls of fancy, I could withſtand reality---fight it, and conquer. Conquer!---how eaſily ſaid!---how difficult to be done!

I am afraid, VICTORIA, the conflict would prove too hard for me. How often have I not ſighed in ſecret for a gown of the neweſt taſte, for a diamond of a brighter water than my own, or for the opening of a ball! Is not a man a more tormenting trifle to a lady's brain, than a piece of ſilk, a diamond, or the honour

of a firſt minuet?——Am I not mad to aſk that queſtion of the ingenuous VICTORIA, who never ſwerved from nature, or wiſhed but for FROSBY?

Faſhion has given an exiſtence to ſo many temptations unknown to my VICTORIA——Oh! my heart, my heart!——Adieu.

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LETTER

LETTER VII.

HOW! FROSBY already uneaſy! For what pray, dear VICTORIA? Had you not let him into the ſecrets of your heart, I ſhould not be ſurpriſed at it: but he knows you love him, and he is uneaſy!—he has hardly a rival, and he is fearful and ſuſpicious! Had he an hundred, ought he to miſtruſt the ſincerity of my VICTORIA?

Fear that VICTORIA may change!—Surely you are miſtaken, you have had too many proofs of Mr. FROSBY's love and reſpect, not to doubt ſuch a monſtruous metamorphoſis.

How could he love and not eſteem you?—No, it is not in his power to have

a thought injurious to my VICTORIA: Once again, you are miſtaken.

Miſtaken!—You tell me, "he was two days abſent from Brenton-hall"——

Two days!— And he loves you!—— That, "coming the third, he made no apology: and upon your obligingly enquiring after his health, by a ſweet, How d'ye do? he ſullenly anſwered, Very Well, and then fell a criticiſing the flowers you had juſt been drawing.

"At dinner, he did not once offer to help you — he found fault with the flavor of a hare you had ventured to commend— and even refuſed to ſing.—— Before and after tea, Mr. FROSBY was neither with you, nor with any body elſe, but kept conſtantly at the harpſicord—Only ten minutes

nutes before he took leave, he began to tell how the country would revive upon Sir JOHN MODISH's arrival——You then happening to ſmile, the gentleman made faces, and went away."

Well——all that, notwithſtanding the mighty charge——yes——All that nothing at all——or ſomething indeed.

What did the man mean? Let us lay our heads together, and we will gueſs it right—or wrong. Wrong would be more to the purpoſe; for in a ſituation like yours, truth is generally an impertinent intruder.

FROSBY, by his abſence, intended either to enhance the pleaſure of ſeeing you, or to know how he ſhould be regreted.——

" Worſe

" Worſe and worſe, CAROLINA.——

Would you have him love ſome body elſe, or not be in his right ſenſes?——

" How cruel you are, CAROLINA!"

Some men are apt to realiſe what ſtrikes their fancy: FROSBY, perhaps, has had a dream, in which he did not act the firſt part—who knows but Sir John was happier than he in that dream?——

" The vexing Creature!——"

Well—Mr. FROSBY had a fit of pride—of folly— of — I know not what—— Where can I find the idea of what is not? How can I ſuſpect there is not a perpetual incenſe and adoration, when

VIC-

VICTORIA is the deity?——I will not believe—— believe!——no: I will *not* believe——And I tell you again and again you are miſtaken. Adieu.

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LETTER

LETTER VIII.

THE world may ſay what they pleaſe——They will never alter my opinion: it ſhall be as unchangeable as the eternal laws of Nature.

Is it not provoking, VICTORIA, that men ſhould wantonly indulge themſelves in every violation of their duty: that they ſhould even pride themſelves in it, whilſt the leaſt frailty, the leaſt omiſſion in one of our ſex, is cried down as an outrage to humanity, manners, and ſociety?

Are there two natures, two laws? and can woman only offend, though the

the weakeſt, and the moſt powerfully tempted?

If, in reſpect to religion, virtue and vice are equally rewarded and puniſhed, why do we differ in our notions of honour and infamy? Is there any other good, any other evil, than what the laws of morality enjoin or prohibit? Can the ſame crime be, and not be?——If men are at liberty to be unjuſt and perfidious, whence that liberty?—— Whence the judgment againſt us for imitating them?

If people will believe there is no religion, when prieſts live as if there was none, is it not to be feared, that juſtice and probity, ſhall be looked upon as precarious and abſurd, when, far from being

being in eſteem, they are ridiculed by the wiſeſt part of mankind?

I do not intend, VICTORIA, to apologiſe for the foibles of my ſex: Inſtances of depravity will never juſtify it in the heart of your CAROLINA; but let me pity the unfortunate women, whom an abuſed virtue, and too unguarded ſenſibility, have brought to ruin and contempt; though from that ruin, and that contempt, men draw both their fame and glory.

How ridiculous, how prepoſterous the opinion, that condemns in us thoſe very actions, which it not only applauds in men, but even ſets in an honourable light! Are we to ſupport the dignity of rational beings, while they ſport with it?— Is it upon us alone, that the ſafety and welfare of mankind

mankind depend? How ſtupidly unjuſt, inſolent, and tyrannical!

I have been led to theſe reflections, by a ſcandalous report raiſed againſt Lady WYNDHAM: how well-founded it is, none can tell; however, every body ſneers, cenſures, and defames.

Lady WYNDHAM has every quality to pleaſe, and make a man happy: but Lord WYNDHAM, after four months marriage, changing, on a ſudden, his flattering behaviour into a mortifying indifference, ſhe at length launched into ſociety, and moſt likely was courted into a revenge.

Lady WYNDHAM has been ſeen twice in a landau, with Sir HENRY MULGRAVE, in Windſor-park——And from that circumſtance

cumſtance comes the mighty clamor againſt her reputation.——Lord WYNDHAM, to be ſure, is not in the wrong, and has had no hand in the ſeeming miſconduct of his lady: he acted as a gentleman: was he to be faithful to an amiable woman who was his wife? No, no, he is not to be blamed; and Lady WYNDHAM, is juſtly ſcandaliſed, for having youth, beauty, and a feeling heart.—Sir HENRY triumphs, and Lady WYNDHAM—I am really in a paſſion at hearing ſo many impertinences—What is equally ſtupid, and infinitely more inſufferable, our ladies at court, who ſhould defend the unhappy fair, are the moſt diligent promoters of her diſgrace.——How can they forget they already are, or ſoon may be, in need of a greater indulgence themſelves? But there muſt be fools

fools every where, and upon every ſtage——. I except Brenton-hall, where lives my generous, ſenſible, VICTORIA. Adieu.

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LETTER

LETTER IX.

WHY do I ſeek for retreat, when all the world pants after joy and diſſipation? Why this throbbing heart?—— Whence ſo many ſighs?——Peace, Content, amiable Indifference, ye faithful attendants of my former days, have you forſaken me?—— Diſmal thought!—— Wretched CAROLINA!—— An unuſual emotion glows through my veins——I think, and ſhudder——Can nothing afford relief to my dejected ſoul?——Where ſhall I look for comfort?——Muſic, books, ſociety, have loſt all their charms, all their illuſion———Pleaſure has fled from my looking-glaſs, from my toilet, from the language of my admirers——— fled from whatever was a diverſion, or a delight to me.—— Lady PRESTON!—— It was

was you, who inticing me to the play——No—you was the blind miniſter of fate—It tempted you, led the way, and love compleated my miſery.

What troubles, what anxieties have I not felt from that fatal day!———A ſtranger——A man whoſe birth, manners, fortune, are ſtill unknown to me——And my heart dares to throb at the dear remembrance——My mind to dwell upon his graceful features———Oh! VICTORIA! VICTORIA!———

Don't I complain ſweetly?——Is not my heart raviſhingly torn by the imperious and diſtracting paſſion? Was VICTORIA ever ſo deeply affected as her CAROLINA? Had ſhe ever a raving minute?———Mercileſs FROSBY, who never

rallied

raiſed your ſpirits, by real whims, or apparent inconſtancy!

I hate the man, for not having made you diſplay the over-ruling eloquence inherent to diſappointment, jealouſy, fury, and deſpair.—How pleaſing to have ſeen you walk, and ſit, and walk again———Fetch broken ſighs—Lift your eyes to heaven, and call for vengeance, or relief, in ſome noble, pathetic ſoliloquy!—How full of dignity, terror, tenderneſs, and ſorrow, each ſtep, each look, each word, each tear!

Nature, VICTORIA, formed you to charm under every ſhape; how ungenerous then the lover who keeps you from the knowledge of your hidden charms!—How few men would deny themſelves the pleaſure of ſo many expreſſive changes,

changes, and the yet more inviting temptation of raiſing ſtorms in your loving breaſt, to enjoy a tear, and the extacy of a reconciliation!

Were I in love—Were I! 'Tis prettily ſaid, indeed: Well, had I a lover, I would torment him to the utmoſt; I would ſearch into the temper of the man—How could that be done without inſpiring him with inſtantaneous, fierce, and contradictory paſſions?

The ſecure lover, ever degenerates into—a huſband. How can his lady, living in a more brilliant, and indulgent ſociety, help being followed if handſome, admired if witty, loved if tender, tempted if in her bloom? Muſt ſhe dreſs unfaſhionably, move aukwardly, talk ridiculouſly, to pleaſe her ſovereign lord, who begins

begins to be uneaſy, fretful and perplexed? Muſt ſhe caſt her virtues away, to whirl from folly to folly?——Had the man's temper appeared whilſt a lover, a ſenſible lady would either have denied him her hand, or he would have reformed by the palpability of his abſurdity and impertinence.

Marriage, dear VICTORIA, is ſo important a buſineſs—Is it not extravagant to treat it with careleſsneſs, while we are ſo nice and attentive in the choice of an headdreſs, the colour of a ribbon, or the make of a ſhoe?—I doubt whether reaſon is not an empty name——Whither am I running?—Lord, what a letter! Why does my VICTORIA deſire her fooliſh CAROLINA to write? Lend her thy pen, or bid her be ſilent.—" Any thing upon nothing,

and

and nothing upon any thing, rather than nothing at all."———Such were your commands——I obey: ſo forgive. Adieu.

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LETTER X.

I Was very buſy at my toilet this morning practiſing a new ſmile, and improving upon a courtly attitude, when Sir John Modish ſent his name up. Unwilling to be helped in my deep ſtudy by ſo great an adept, I ordered him to the

drawing room, where I preſently went to receive him.

How! hardly noon, and ſo freſh and blooming! I ſwear, no woman can boaſt of ſo many native charms as Lady CAROLINA.

And the man was going to kiſs my hand.

Have you ſo eaſily forgot Lady VICTORIA, Sir JOHN, the unrivaled VICTORIA?

Would you have me for her ſake be unjuſt to the accompliſhed CAROLINA?——

I begged him to ſit down.

When do you propoſe to ſet off for Cumberland?——

In a few days, My Lady. I am come to take my leave and beſeech your intereſt---You cannot refuſe it me,——Tell me,

me, Dear Madam, would you refuſe it me?

My intereſt!——Is there any need of it when Sir JOHN MODISH is the lover?—Only FROSBY in the way, and you call for help!———

I will unboſom myſelf to you, Madam. When I conſider the character, the education, the principles of Lady VICTORIA, I do ſincerely miſtruſt myſelf, and am all apprehenſion—Be your amazement ever ſo great, it really is ſo, and I do not even bluſh for it——no, not even bluſh for it.

I could affect every quality and every virtue, Lady VICTORIA may eſteem: I could put on an air of reſerve and candour, but it would be a deceit, and I diſdain it. She muſt ſee me as I am, and there being ſo little affinity between us, how can I pleaſe? how can I be reſpected?———

The thought diſtracts me. Why am I careſſed in London, and neglected in Cumberland?——Are our manners here ſo oppoſite to good order as to frighten the artleſs offspring of nature?——But few women could entertain ſo extraordinary a prejudice—Ought Lady VICTORIA to be one of them?——How hard this!——Is it not very hard, Madam?—

Lady VICTORIA, Sir JOHN, knows mankind are, and muſt be, ſubject to many foibles: ſhe will as readily praiſe you for your virtues, as ſhe will pity you for your errors.——

Amiable creature!——Would ſhe but ſmile upon me!——To be reduced to the point of fearing FROSBY leſs than myſelf! How ſtrange, and unaccountable!——

Was there the leaſt ſhadow of honour in diſguiſing my temper ſo as not to be ſuſpected

pected for Sir JOHN MODISH, I would attempt it—I would top my part to a miracle.—How many pretenders to virtue would not ſcruple to take advantage of her ingenuity, to gain her heart, that their whole life might be a perpetual ſcene of joy and happineſs?—No—let me be ever ſo hated I will be like myſelf. If my love, my reſpect for the virtues of Lady VICTORIA cannot change me, no pretext whatever ſhall force me to wear a perfidious maſk.——She ſhall never reproach me with the intention of betraying her into a miſtake.——

Pity me, Lady CAROLINA; and if friendſhip can allow you to write to her of a man, though unworthy of her attention, pray write——Let me beg the favour on my knee.———

Be pleaſed to keep your ſeat, Sir.——

Proud man! How meek and humble!———

He had ſuch an air of ſincerity and concern, that I was really moved——— Words flow with ſuch a grace from his lips——He ſpoke in ſuch a noble and diſintereſted manner——What failings has he that moſt people of faſhion have not? With this difference, VICTORIA, that if folly could decently play on any one's features, he is almoſt the only man who could adorn it.

The ſeed of every virtue is in his ſoul, and his love for thee, will make it ſpring up. 'Tis by Lady VICTORIA, ſays my brother, with whom Sir JOHN is a great favourite, that he will be made conſcious, he was not born merely to be a beau: to her

her he will be indebted for the diſcovery of his hidden qualities.

Lord PELHAM, VICTORIA, is a judge of men: ſince he eſteems Sir JOHN, notwithſtanding his frivolity and diſſipation, he muſt deſerve his good opinion, and that opinion is an honour and a praiſe.———

He made me promiſe I would write: and the man, in the firſt tranſports of his gratitude, claſped me ſo eagerly in his arms———How could I avoid it?——A kiſs was given—yes, a kiſs.——Was I to thunder—to thunder for a kiſs! No, no, I wiſhed him a good journey, and ſucceſs—and ſucceſs, VICTORIA!——— He went away thanking me——thanking me!—— Surely the man was half mad. Adieu.

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LETTER XI.

Lady VICTORIA NEVIL to Lady CAROLINA PELHAM.

WANTON CAROLINA! Dareſt thou thus profane the ſacred language of love?—Beware, indiſcreet girl, of the tender expreſſion———Imitate not the flights of a paſſion whoſe name is terrible to the moſt intrepid——— Suffer not thy heart to heave———Sigh not out a minute in the deceits of thy imagination.———Beware, CAROLINA, beware of the bewitching ſenſations ever inſeparable from the thought of love———Quickly do they engage the ſoul with alluring and unrelenting raptures——Quickly do they warn it of its native deſires: Once in that delirious ſeat of feelings and deluſions, prudence ſtruggles in vain———Indiffe-

rence

rence dies away amid the fond temptations.

What heart will not run into wild extravagance when the head is poſſeſſed with a reſiſtleſs paſſion!——Trifle not——— Ceaſe to trifle, CAROLINA, with mighty Love, leſt the ſpiteful deity force upon thee the reality of a mimicked flame.—Make not thyſelf the ſport of a deluſive fancy.— Still be thou ignorant of the wretched, reſtleſs hours that wait on hapleſs love——. Dread to number the minutes of thy exiſtence by never-dying troubles and anxieties.

Oh, CAROLINA! If even the certainty of being loved attones not for the ſmalleſt injuſtice in the lover: if that injuſtice is torture to an enamoured ſoul, to what height

of agony, might not a hopeleſs paſſion carry thy extreme ſenſibility !

A ſtranger !——Fatal was the day when thy eyes were ſtruck with the lovely youth !——When thy ears liſtened to his graceful accents! When thy fond heart by infectious ſympathy led thee to gaze, and applaud !——But——thou loveſt him not, CAROLINA.——Though thy mind is buſied with his charms, thy ſoul is yet unacquainted with ſleepleſs nights, and perplexing reveries—Thou haſt had but a faint fit of love——indulge it not with reflection, or thou art undone——for ever undone.

Thou knoweſt not the treachery of love——Rouſe not the innate wiſhes of thy ſoul——Lay not thyſelf at the mercy of nature——Forbear to think, to dream, to talk,

talk, to write of love——Stop thy ſtraying fancy——Whither would it not wander?——

You tell me of Sir JOHN MODISH——Can there be a more convincing proof you love not?——Of Sir JOHN!——Oh, CAROLINA! never tell me but of FROSHY. Adieu.

Beenton-hall,— 176——

LETTER XII.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

LADY PELHAM and I were juſt ſtepping out of the parlour for Soho, when a thundering rap announced a viſit. My mother, having forgot ſhe was not to be at home, Lord GEORGE PELERSTON was introduced.

Judge of my ſurpriſe, VICTORIA, when I beheld the lovely youth whoſe charming image, my heart had, in ſpite of prudence, ſo conſtantly retained. It was ſo unforeſeen, ſo unexpected a *rencontre*, that my aſtoniſhment would have certainly appeared in an hundred ſhapes, had I not immediately called to my aid my fan, and my reaſon. Our eyes inſtantly met, and his

his confuſion, though carefully diſſembled, was not leſs viſible than mine.

Since I came from my travels, ſaid he to my mother, with a faltering accent, I have been ſo much in the country that it was not in my power to pay your Ladyſhip my reſpects ſooner——But, ladies, you are going out——I will not have you ſtay a minute longer. Lady CAROLINA would not forgive me, was I to deprive her of her pleaſures.——

Indeed, my lord, as it is a mere chance, whether I ſhall get or loſe any pleaſure, by ſtaying or going, I'll willingly venture a few minutes, if my lady thinks we are too ſoon for Mrs. Cornelys'.——

Mrs. Cornelys', Madam——'Tis hardly eight o'clock.——

We all ſat down.

Are

Are you juſt from France, My Lord?—

Yes, My Lady.———

All life in Paris?——

In London we think ſo, and never was there a more glaring miſtake. No people can excel the French in the *appearance* of happineſs———none are leſs ſo in reality.

Idleneſs, pride, and luxury diſplay a brilliant ſhow: 'tis the general ſpirit of the nation, though each individual is weighed down with taxes, arbitrary laws, the cupidity of their prieſts, and the deſpotiſm of their miniſters. Was it not for the noble and ſpirited reſiſtance of their parliaments againſt the impertinent authority of the pope, and the unjuſt and ambitious deſigns of the few wicked courtiers who are at the helm of adminiſtration, France would be in as abject ſlavery as Venice or Turkey.——

You

You muſt own, My Lord, that their education is better than ours.——

If the French, My Lady, poſſeſſed more virtue, talents, valour, and patriotiſm, than we, I ſhould be of your opinion, but as the contrary is palpable——

What notions you have got, Lord Peterſton! How came you to think that virtue was a neceſſary part of modern education?——In what univerſity, or academy, is that either thought of or practiſed?——

If generoſity, courage, learning, and equity, are to be met with in England, they are the effects of liberty, which produces emulation, and leads to grandeur and heroiſm, or of a diſpoſition in our organs, better adapted to receive an impreſſion of the great, noble, or ſublime. This is an accidental advantage we owe to nature, My Lord, or to the

wiſdom

wiſdom of our conſtitution, and ſufficient only to form a patriot, a general, an orator, or a man of ſenſe: but for the accompliſhments that conſtitute a fine gentleman, it is unreaſonable not to acknowledge we receive them from France.

Are not almoſt all our people of rank and fortune educated in Paris?——Is not our vying here with each other who ſhall beſt mimic the French, and turn common ſenſe into buffoonery, an unanſwerable argument againſt you?——

That only proves, we have but few good heads amongſt us, Madam, and I am heartily ſorry for it.——

Few! when the whole nation—

The whole nation, My Lady! I hope not.——

Yes, the whole nation. Are not the people of quality the whole nation? Do not both the town and country take their

faſhions

faſhions and manners from us, and we from France? Don't we import from our neighbours our countenances and complexions, as well as our ſilks, laces, and cambrics.———

Does not that confirm that there are very few good heads amongſt us? What will become of our manufacturers, Madam, our artiſts, our merchants, our——

Are we to trouble ourſelves about them? Is it not for ourſelves we dreſs, dance, and uſe coſtly furniture? Muſt we look frightful, and live miſerably, that a few thouſands of our own countrymen may not ſtarve? Can they do any thing for us with taſte? What matters it that thoſe *unborn* plebeians are loaded with wretchedneſs, ſo long as we flutter at St. James's, with gaiety, elegance, and ſplendour?— What is the welfare of our country, what

are

are the lives of thouſands, when oppoſed by faſhion ?——

I wiſh, My Lady, the parliament would lay a tax upon every Engliſhman, who ſhall ſearch for his manners out of England, and not be pleaſed with its produce.——

You are too much of a gentleman, My Lord, not to except the ladies in your motion for a penalty.—

Are not our ladies endued with beauty, delicacy, and ſenſe ? What need of foreign art when ſo much favoured by nature ? Were they to value what we have at home, and ſet the example of patriotiſm, who would not follow it ? Who would not be the firſt to diſplay his love and impartiality for an ingenious and reſpectable nation ?—What an———

How do you like the French ladies, My Lord ?——

They

They have ſome charms,——

Have they! Well, that is ſomething at leaſt France can boaſt of.——*Same* charms!——

The French, Madam, have great parts, great qualities, and perhaps ſome advantages over us—But I wiſh the Engliſh—

Pray, Sir, give me leave to aſk you what are thoſe advantages over us?——

Indeed, My lady, you are ſo warm an advocate for the French that I could not help complying——

How! Lord Pelerſton knows how to flatter, and comply againſt his own ſentiments! Is not that a French way?—

It will be the way of all the world when Lady Pelham——

Worſe, and worſe, My Lord.

I think, My Lady, Lord Pelerſton is to be commended for his ſincerity.——

You think ſo, Carolina?——

Do

Do protect me, Lady Carolina.——

You have no need of her intereſt, Sir, a nobleman of your principles is an honour to his country: I was in jeſt, and you have pleaſed me mightily. I am glad you deſerve the good opinion which the public entertains of you.

How agreeably undeceived did Lord George appear! How gratefully he thanked my mother!———How unwillingly, Victoria, how unwillingly he took his leave!

When he was gone, Lady Pelham told me ſhe wiſhed ſuch a huſband for her Carolina.——Carolina ſmiled, kiſſed her hand, tript to the coach, and flew to Soho. —— Five o'clock! —— The day breaking upon me!———Adieu.

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LETTER

LETTER XIII.

The ſame to the ſame.

I Wiſh, Victori, you would ſend me the recipe of your art of pleaing, that it might be ſpread through the hree kingdoms for the honour and adrantage of our ſex.

Lady Preſton ſays there is no living vith me, I ſet ſuch a value upon you, it the expence of every other indivilual——She whiſpers now and then, that have loſt ſeveral admirers I might have ept in my chains, had I not unſeaonably ſpoke of my amiable friend.

If I am not more loved and reſpected for ommending beauty and modeſty, what ill help me to love and admiration? nd if men wiſh for the object of my praiſes,

praiſes, am I not amply rewarded by the aſſurance that virtue and delicacy have not yet forſaken them?——

Would you appear but a week in London——But no——ſtay at Brenton-hall, for though Carolina has the moſt exalted friendſhip for her Victoria, ſhe has too her ſhare of vanity; and vanity, in ſome circumſtances, is not always a rational quality.

I verily believe I could ſuffer you to enjoy an univerſal empire over mankind: But was your reign to begin, whether I ſhould not be weak enough to enter the liſts to claim it, is really doubtful.

Who can flatter themſelves to be great, noble, and without envy in every ſituation of life? Being neither a fool, nor an enthuſiaſt,

thuſiaſt, I will not pretend to heavenly virtues with a mortal frame.——A Letter from Cumberland!

What have you written, Victoria!—What have I read!——Am I not deceived?——Is it then true that Froſby was jealous?——Jealous!——The pureſt heart is not free, in the polite world, from the ſuſpicion of inconſtancy: but Victoria, a ſtranger to art, diſſimulation, and flattery—The ingenuous Victoria, who never ſpoke but truth—who never acted but with reaſon!——how guilty the man who dares to call her ſincerity in queſtion!——How ridiculouſly profane!

If Victoria is not happy in the man ſhe loves, who can expect to be ſo? Are all men ſo unjuſt and ungenerous, or is it a diſeaſe peculiar to a few?—

"Froſby

" Frosby came, and falling at your feet, declared his fears—ventured a doubt"—Ah! Victoria, had he had to do with Carolina—And you, sweet creature, did condescend " to listen—and to forgive."—I have no patience——I hate you heartily.

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LETTER

LETTER XIV.

Sir JOHN MODISH to Lord PELHAM.

AFTER three days hard travelling through dirt and ſnow, I reached at laſt my native hall, without vapours or broken bones.

Muſt I not be immenſely in love, Frederick, thus to have braved the weather under its moſt hideous ſhapes? And it is the roving Sir John, who willingly expoſed his delicate frame to the mercileſs inclemencies of a tempeſtuous ſeaſon for a girl of eighteen!——

How you would laugh at me, was not the inchanting Victoria the object of ſo much heroiſm!——She excuſes and juſtifies all, the heavenly maid!—More rationally might a man turn knight-errant in the defence of her charms, than a commoner loſe his popularity and virtue for the miſerable honour of a place, or a title.—— What are grandeur, riches, and diſtinction, to the unſpeakable pleaſure of wandering over rocks and mountains, through valleys and foreſts, to aſſert the ſuperiority of the moſt exquiſite beauty, the moſt exalted character that heaven ever formed?

What greater encouragement to forget the whole world, than to hear her voice, and gaze on her lovely figure?—A ſenſible being can never wiſh—never dream of a more ſatisfactory ſenſation——a more engaging bliſs—

bliſs.—Far from me the idea of any other happineſs——All my deſires are centered in the ſight of my Victoria, and the flattering hope of pleaſing her.

Were you to behold Victoria, no longer, Frederick, would you defy the allurements of love.—How quickly undone by the bewitching illuſions ſurrounding her!——how ſuddenly changed into a very lover!——how delighted with the new emotion!——how vexed not to have felt it ſooner! The greater your wiſdom, parts, and delicacy, the more rapid would her triumph be, and your defeat.

She has hundreds of reſiſtleſs charms to force her empire into the proudeſt heart.——Innumerable graces conſtantly wait upon her, and call for our homage.

Who could behold—who could liſten, and not ſubmit, not adore!——Impoſſible—impoſſible.

11 o'Clock.——

The gay, the flutterin g Sir Jon Modiſh, who never once ſeriouſly pronounced "I love you"—who never courted pleaſures, which were not graced by pride, faſhion, or inſpired by the enthuſiaſm of youthful blood——who would hazard both life and fortune to be ſung, celebrated, and talked of—Oh, Frederick! cannot you reſtore me to the identity of that vain, noiſy, ſcareleſs fellow?—I look for him in myſelf—but where is he?

If no longer Sir John Modiſh——what am I—Am I not really that very Sir John who

who could deny reaſon, laugh at morality, admire Hobbes, applaud Bolingbroke, and ſoberly indulge in every folly? Love ſurely has not ſuch a power, and were I once more in the airy regions of St. James's, I ſhould recover from this fall.

There is a Taliſman in theſe mountains, ſo powerfully oppoſite to vice and modern taſte—ſo forcibly attractive to honour, religion and virtue—Why came I hither after an abſence of fifteen years?——Curioſity, my Lord, curioſity---How ſeverely am I puniſhed for it!

Lady Carolina, the lovely Lady Carolina, never ceaſed to praiſe her Victoria—"She had every qualification, every beauty, every virtue, that could poſſibly be wiſhed for."

It was ſo new to me, to hear one handſome woman ſpeak ſo favourably of another, that I longed to know if there could be ſuch a treaſure hidden in Cumberland.—I came, Frederick, and ſaw the terreſtrial angel.———I knew not which was moſt to be commended, Lady Carolina for doing juſtice to her friend, or Lady Victoria for deſerving her encomiums ſo well.—How generous Lady Carolina! but how fatal her generoſity to me!

Awed by the ſacred aſpect of virgin decency——conſcious of my own unworthineſs, I addreſſed at a diſtance my homage to the deity; but the fame of my follies being between her and me, I was compelled to love——ſigh——and adore in ſilence.

De-

Dejected almoſt to diſtraction, not daring to ſpeak, to look, to offer my incenſe, I left the country in a moment of deſpair, and fled for relief to London.

I tried, I abuſed every pleaſure——— Spite of my moſt fertile imagination, the idea of Victoria ſtill intruded, and damped the brilliant wanderings of my reaſon.—No days without thinking—no nights without dreaming of her———Dead to pleaſure, though eager to enjoy it----What a ſituation, my Lord, what a wretched ſituation!

At laſt, certain of being a ſlave—a deſpiſed ſlave, I came back to find fault with Victoria---to rebel----to break my chains.

1 o'Clock.

On Monday laſt I went to Brenton-hall.---Frederick, how ſhall I tell thee of my ſhame?——How weak, how diſconcerted in the preſence of beauty, when virtue, imprinted on every feature, gives life to the angelic form, and commands our reſpect and admiration!—The intrepid Sir John paid his devoirs to the ingenuous Victoria with a faltering voice—a trembling leg——a ſhaking hand——a lively red on his cheek—a ſtupid confuſion in his eyes——Could you have believed it, my Lord?—Could you have thought it poſſible?—From ſuch an height ſunk ſo low!——Heavens!---and I have out lived the digraceful minute.

By

By good luck, Mrs. Brenton attributed my unmanly carriage to the intenſe coldneſs of the day.——

You look not ſo well as you did, Sir John——This climate will not agree with the ſoftneſs of a courtier's complexion—Sit nearer the fire—

I drew ſo near it——

Not ſo near neither, you may endanger your health by ſo rapid a tranſition from cold to extreme heat.——

Dear Madam——I am better—

And I ſat next to Victoria.

What do they ſay in London, Sir John?—

I think, Madam, it would be more *à propos* to tell you what they do not ſay——

Why ſo?—

They are ſo unneceſſarily taken up with mighty trifles, ſo buſy about nothing——

How was Lady Carolina, Sir John?—

Then, Frederick, I became an orator, and, thanks to your charming ſiſter, was liſtened to with complacency and attention.

How I long to ſee her, Sir John! But the dear girl delights too much in London: ſhe will not leave it for Brenton-hall——There is no life here for my Carolina.—

The converſation having laſted half an hour, to the great comfort of your diſtreſſed

treſſed friend, Mrs. Brenton deſired I would ſpend the day with them—You may be ſure I gave her not the trouble of another invitation.

I ſhall be back in two minutes, ſaid Mrs. Brenton, and ſhe roſe to go out of the room.

"There is a fine opportunity for you, Sir John."

You think ſo, my Lord: but there is no ſuch thing with Lady Victoria. When I tell you there is no ſuch thing, you may believe me: no body would have more readily ſeized it, and ſince I did not, depend upon it there was none———no, none, even for the word of *Love*.

How can you prefer this retreat, my Lady, to London?—this retreat to the ſociety

ſociety of your Carolina?—Why ſo ſolitary when ſo eminently formed to be ſeen——admi———

I know Carolina has the higheſt friendſhip for me; but ſhe has a noble heart, Sir John. I ſhould forfeit her eſteem was I to leave Mrs. Brenton, whilſt my preſence can contribute to her happineſs.———Gratitude is in the heart of Carolina—but what virtues has not my diſcreet and ſenſible friend?——Am I alone with ſo many duties to diſcharge, with an aunt for whom I feel the love and reſpect of a daughter? Would you think yourſelf alone, Sir, with a tender parent?———

What would you have had me anſwer to that queſtion, Frederick? Yes or No?——

"Neither of them, Sir John."

Very

Very right, my Lord, the No was ſo impertinent a lie, the Yes ſuch an unſeaſonable truth——

Your notions are ſo refined, Madam, that few people upon earth——

Refined! are they not in nature and reaſon?———

Yes, my Lady: but they are ſo little attended to in a world where opinion and convenience favour the contrary ſentiments, that it ſeems to be tacitly agreed not to mind them at all: of courſe, there are very few Carolinas———very few Victorias——and ſtill fewer men who deſerve them.———

Your remark is too ſevere, Sir John: the world is not ſo bad———'tis a real misfortune to believe it ſo——— 'Tis an outrage both to ſociety and ourſelves.

Prin-

Principles, my Lady, contradicted by pleaſure or ſelf-intereſt, have no effect on men ſwayed by every blaſt of paſſion, every caprice of the age: the diſtemper being almoſt univerſal, ſhame no longer diſgraces thoſe who labour under it.

Virtue has few votaries, and reaſon is led and intoxicated by the moſt trifling whim or deſire. Faſhion and luxury have driven men from every hold of honour, and honeſty; and no pretext is left untried to juſtify the delirious flights of our heads and hearts. Modeſty is called awkwardneſs, innocence ſtupidity———

Stop, Sir John, ſtop. What an odious and deſpicable character you give me of mankind! Is it poſſible that men ſhould have deviated ſo far from the dignity of their nature, as to reſiſt the ſacred voice of reaſon, and coolly ſpurn at morality,

whoſe

whoſe precepts are ingrafted in our hearts?——Will not the neglect of theſe ſupreme laws, fill ſociety with the utmoſt diſorder, and diffuſe a general contempt of friendſhip, juſtice, and probity?——— There may be men, indeed, whom a mean education has cauſed to err, and diſhonour humanity———

Alas! my Lady, 'tis not of them I ſpeak. They are generally obedient to the laws, and attached to religion. Their vices are as inſignificant as their virtues, being ſoon puniſhed if guilty, and never rewarded though truly deſerving. 'Tis the men of rank, and faſhion——'tis the learned I have characteriſed.———Thoſe only who enjoy wealth, credit and power, poſſeſſing innumerable means to be vicious with impunity, readily gratify their paſſions, and——

Mrs.

Mrs. Brenton coming in with Froſby, I roſe up———Lady Victoria received him with a chearful look and a half ſmile——.

Mr. Froſby is tall, well-ſhaped, and has a noble air; was he more *dégagé*, and lively in his countenance, he might cut a handſome figure at Lady A-La-Mode's rout, he talks well, and ſenſibly at Brenton-hall—but would hardly be intelligible any where elſe. The man would do to perfection for the pulpit———he———But why of Froſby, when my heart is full of Victoria!

Dear Frederick! How ſhe has compoſed my reſtleſs ſpirits by her affability! Divine creature! How ſweet tempered, though virtuous!———how gay,

gay, though diſcreet!——How the day ſlipped away!——I came reſolved to hate, and to be free!——What a monſtruous letter!——Forgive, Frederick, the tranſports of a lover, who could write for ever of the beauty he adores. Adieu.

Modiſh-hall—176—

LETTER

LETTER XV.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

VICTORIA forgives her Carolina, and though my expreſſions are pretty ſevere, ſhe "don't know but Froſby might deſerve them was ſhe to conſult reaſon in her judgment againſt him."

Well I knew, Victoria, that love could neither annihilate, in your heart, the holy ties of friendſhip, nor render you unjuſt towards Carolina. I had no need of any new proofs of the ſolidity of your principles, and greatneſs of ſoul; I wrote to Victoria, and was certain ſhe would have challenged my ſincerity, had I not ſpoke what I really thought.—How then could I not

not condemn!——But as you have forgot the paſt injuries, and Froſby has promiſed never to renew them, I am ſilent.

Sir John has made his appearance at Brenton-hall. "He was polite and ſubmiſſive to a ſcruple to Mrs. Brenton: he kiſſed her cat——played with her lap-dog——fed her birds——ſung when deſired——and loſt his money at piquet."

He muſt undoubtedly take with the old lady, or I am prodigiouſly deceived: theſe trifles are of the greateſt moment when done with grace, and a becoming ſpirit.

"He did her the honour of the virtues ſo conſpicuous in my Victoria."

How

How he flattered her pride!

"And Mrs. Brenton was heard to ſay, *This is a man indeed!*"

Was it a ſneer or a compliment?——Is it for being like no body of her acquaintance, that he has pleaſed or diſpleaſed her fancy?——You ſhould have given me a ſketch of her looks, and manner of pronouncing the words.

"Sir John was gay, thoughtleſs, witty——and neither noiſy nor troubleſome.—He was cold but complaiſant to Froſby—decent and reſpectful to Victoria——and ſhe has not to complain of one look or expreſſion.

You are amazed, that "a man can ſo eaſily ſkip from the extremes of libertiniſm to

to thoſe of decency, and you queſtion whether he is not all falſehood and perfidy, ſince ſuch a change can only be the work of time, or the fear of univerſal deſertion and contempt."

Your obſervation, Victoria, may be juſt with reſpect to men naturally vicious, or hardened in corruption through idleneſs, habit, or ſtupidity: but they who, like Sir John, have been ſolely led aſtray by faſhion, youth, and caprice, are quickly recalled to the paths of honour, diſcretion, and virtue.———There are always hopes of a man of parts, ſpirit, and ingenuity.—I could give you many inſtances of people of rank, who are univerſally eſteemed, though they——But to what purpoſe ſhould I juſtify Sir John?——You have no intention to take him for a lover-----

cannot

cannot he do for an acquaintance ?-----If he ſeems what he really is not, why be offended at him ſo long as he is not himſelf ?

Sir John is to be commended for waiting upon Victoria with the badges of as many good qualities as he can poſſibly adorn himſelf with. 'Tis an homage he pays her virtues, and an evident acknowledgment of her ſuperiority over him.———Adieu, be happy, and no longer complain of my ſilence.

" I will not forgive it, Carolina."——

You muſt, Victoria, you muſt——— I had nothing material to write——— No, nothing material.———

" Ca-

" Carolina, Carolina! and Lord Peerſton !"———

Will you not believe me, Victoria? Adieu.

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LET

LETTER XVI.

The ſame to the ſame.

LADY Pelham has juſt ſent an invitation to Lord Pelerſton to dine with us to-morrow.

Men, ſaid ſhe to me, cannot be perfectly known but by a familiar communication: one hour of friendly converſe, of unaffected tittle-tattle, brings them more effectually to our knowledge, than ten years of formal viſits.

If Lord Pelerſton bears examination, and deſerves my daughter's good opinion, he will be welcome at any time, without the neceſſity of a compliment-card.—— I beg my Carolina will always ſpeak to her mother with the openneſs of a friend, and

and never diſtinguiſhed her from the amiable Victoria.——If any thing of moment—if any preference for Lord Pelerſton——

And ſhe caſt on me ſuch a piercing look, Victoria!

I imagine, Carolina, that my ſuſpicions were not ſo ill founded——

Dear My Lady——

And I ſtopped, undetermined what to anſwer, ſo ſurpriſed was I at the unexpected diſcovery.

Can Carolina heſitate to diſcloſe to me the ſecrets of her heart!——Does ſhe queſtion my love for her?

And tenderly throwing her arm round my neck——

What does my Carolina think?——Has Lord Pelerſton made any impreſ-

ſion on my lovely daughter?—If it were ſo, is Carolina to be aſhamed of her paſſion?—Is not Lord Pelerſton the man?

Such a good mother, Victoria!

I leaned my head upon her boſom, to hide a bluſh, but was betrayed by a trickling tear.——

Speak, my love, ſpeak: I am thy friend.——How is it with thee?——

Indeed, Madam, I am this moment more affected by your extreme generoſity, than any regard I entertain for Lord Pelerſton.——

But at any other moment, how does he affect you?

I neither lo—ve, nor hate him.——

Hate him! Why ſhould you?—I won't have you hate him, Carolina.—— Come—ſit down,——nearer me—nearer ſtill.—Now tell me all—I'll keep thy ſecret: depend on me.

Then

Then, then, Victoria, I knew not how to begin—what to tell.

'Tis ſo trifling, dear mother—ſuch nonſenſe.—

Well, let me have that nonſenſe.—Cannot you grace it?—Let me ſee how eloquent and feeling my Carolina is.——

I ſmiled, and taking both her hands in mine—

I accidentally ſaw Lord Pelerſton at the play-houſe—he was in the next box—he talked with ſo much ſenſe—ſo much wit, that I could not help liſtening—and being pleaſed.——No man ever fixed like him the eyes, and attention of your Carolina.---

I kiſſed her hand.

When I came home, Lady Preſton, who had been with me to the play, obſerved I was abſent and perplexed, tho' I did all in my power to humour her lively temper.——You yourſelf, my Lady, remarked my being unuſually grave and

thoughtful.—I own I liked to call back the voice, the features of the unknown man, and to muſe upon him.——I knew not his name, nor did I ſee him again till his viſit to you.—

You have ſeen him ſince:—he has been here often—Is he ſenſible of my Carolina's worth?——

Were there any ſincerity in a man's eyes, and expreſſions, I would make no doubt of his affection.—

Has he declared himſelf?—

No. But he looks—he ſpeaks ſo much to the purpoſe—he is ſo aſſiduous—ſo reſpectful—ſo full of meaning when ſilent——One day this week, as we ſat down to cards, he ſtole behind my chair and ſoftly whiſpered—ſo ſoftly!—"Happy the man who ſhall pleaſe the amiable Carolina!"—Is this a ſign he loves your Carolina, dear mother?——

And

And you neither lo-ve, nor hate him?

Spare your daughter—ſpare your Carolina——

And I fell at her feet.

I ought to reſent your unfriendly diſcretion, Carolina.——But—but——

She preſſed me to her boſom——

Thy choice is thy forgiveneſs.——May Pelerſton know all thy value, and deſerve thee.—

And Lord Fanfly, dear mother, Lord Fanfly, that man ſo laviſh of his ſtupidity! ——ſo preſumingly tedious!——

A fine encomium, Carolina, a fine encomium indeed!—

So teazing!——ſo plaguing!——ſo extremely odious!——

Why don't you keep to your cloſet, take a book, or have a head-ach, when he comes?——

Then muſt I be for ever ſick or alone.——When is he not here?——

A hard caſe upon my word for a young Lady of your beauty and ſpirits! ———Why don't you marry Lord Charles to get rid of him?———

Dear mother———

Come, don't be uneaſy—I'll ſee what is to be done: go and get ready for the opera.

As I was going———

Hear me, Carolina---Be ſure to leave at your toilet, that loving face of yours. ---I will not be deprived of my gay Carolina.——Remember, let me not ſeek for you when you are with me.

Are you not in love with Lady Pelham, dear Victoria, for being ſo good to her Carolina?---the excellent mother!———

What's the matter, Lucy?———

My Lady waits for———

Alight,

A light, quickly, a light, I muſt ſeal this letter.———

Scold me no more, ſweet Victoria, for not having written to you ſooner about Lord Pelerſton: I had———

Come, Lucy, fold this, and I'll to the looking-glaſs———Have I no flowers?

Here they are, my Lady.———

Adieu, Victoria, adieu.

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LETTER XVII.

Sir JOHN MODISH to Lord PELHAM.

'TIS death to doubt, but worſe than death to know we have a rival—a rival favoured by Victoria!———Killing certainty!———

Alas! Why have I not the inſenſibility of a ſtoic? Why did Nature give me a ſoul ſo paſſionated———ſpirits ſo inflammable?——Fatal preſent!———What fortitude is not required to bear the ſight of an happy rival, when our hearts are filled and torn by love, the fierceſt of all paſſions!

Is it not cowardice rather than magnanimity, that prompts me to forgive?———Could virtue hold my arm, and triumph

triumph over my thirſt of revenge?——— An happy rival!———Oh, Frederick! Keep me from yielding to an ungenerous thought———preſerve my tortured ſoul from the abyſs of deſpair———let me not be unworthy of thy friendſhip.———

O love! thou lively and bewitching paſſion, how we doat upon thee!——— How charmingly thou enterſt our hearts! ———how grateful thou art to our ſenſes!———how willingly we obey whatever thou commandeſt!———An happy rival!———and my hands are not yet imbrued with the laſt drop of his blood! ———my eyes have not yet been feaſted with the ſight of him inanimate at my feet!———He ſurvives my fury!———he is happy, and neither of us is annihilated!———Rage and madneſs, come and prey upon my effeminate ſpirits.———

ſet them all on fire, and diffuſe over them the oblivion of honour and humanity. Let both the lovers ſhare in my unhappineſs, and plunge with me to the bottomleſs pit of everlaſting miſery.——— Muſt I ſee inſulting joy ſparkle in their eyes, content ſmile in their faces, and pleaſure enliven every feature? Oh, Frederic! My virtue forſakes me; the image is too ſtriking—the wound too deep—let me call for furies and diſtraction.———

Reaſon, reaſon!—Can reaſon oppoſe paſſion—argue with a delirious lover, and make him obey her dictates?———Thou ſhield of inſenſibility, away!———Encounter not the violent ſtorms to which my ſoul is a ſport!———Away!——— What canſt thou avail me?——Froſby ſhall die!------What have I ſaid? Froſby ſhall die!------What crime has he committed,

mitted, which I would not be guilty of? Muſt Froſby die for enjoying the ſupreme bliſs of pleaſing Victoria?----- Has he ſtolen it from me? Was he not the firſt, ---the fortunate firſt, who ſaw, and adored?———Have they injured me in loving each other?---What right have I to trouble them---to rob them of their felicity?---If I love Victoria, ought I not to revere her choice, to ſacrifice my exiſtence to her happineſs?---What a ſelfiſh monſter am I!—To have a deſire that is not in favour of Victoria---that is not in favour of Froſby------Wretched and unjuſt Sir John, and thou thinkeſt thyſelf to be humane and generous!------Alas! let them love---let them be happy---let me not cloud the days of Victoria with ſorrow and diſtreſs!---Inforce the virtuous reſolution, Frederick---let not thy friend

err,

err---reaſon him into benevolence.——Adieu, I'll endeavour to compoſe myſelf, and to entertain no thought unjuſtifiable by honour, Frederick, and Victoria.

Modiſh-hall—176—

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

I Had juſt ſtepped to my cloſet from breakfaſt, when Lord Pelham came to pay me his morning viſit.

What news, brother?——

People running mad about the ſtamp-act!——

The ſtamp-act!—That's no news at all, my Lord.——

How! No news!——

No. Can any thing be right, and not be wrong in London? How could we live without parties and contradictions? Is not half the nation differently organiſed from the other?——Nothing more neceſſary to keep

keep life and ſpirits amongſt us. There would be as much ſaid and written about my ſlipper, as about Lord B*** and his enemies, was I to ſet it in oppoſition to that of the accompliſhed Lady Harriet St*****e. Political and religious controverſy have their native ſeat in England, and as our temper greatly partakes of the mutability of our climate, we are always ready to engage for or againſt——no matter which, ſo we may but quarrel, ſlander, or defame. Were it not for this charming amuſement, we ſhould be devoured by the ſpleen——life would be a vexation, a real evil.——

You are very merry, ſiſter.——

Why ſhould I not be ſo? Am I to concern myſelf about what I cannot do, or honourably repeal when it is done?——Was not Garrick unuſually great in Macbeth on Tueſday?——

He

He was not, Carolina. Ever feeling, natural, and ſublime Garrick is immutably himſelf.———

How did you like the opera laſt night, was it not immenſely well performed?——

It had been ſo—but for the words and the muſic.—

What do you mean, my Lord: the words and the muſic! Is not that the whole opera?———

The whole opera! Fooliſh Carolina. Does it make any part of it to an Engliſh audience?—Is it not for the dances, decorations, machinery, and the honour of England alone, that we annually monopoliſe the beſt muſicians of Europe?—Who ever thought, or ſaid, if in their ſenſes, that an unmeaning ſound could pleaſe?—What are all Italian operas but diſcord to an Engliſh ear? What ſatisfaction can foreign

reign muſic, ſet to foreign words, give me? It may afford inexpreſſible raptures at Rome, Venice, or Florence, but in London———

How you talk, my Lord, when all the world is inchanted, raviſhed with the melody of——

I am glad, Carolina, you are ſo mighty fond of it: As for me, I would rather hear Artaxerxes, and a Handel, than Valentiniano, and all the Cafarelli's of Italy.—

Oh the barbarian, the barbarian! A Peer of England not a virtuoſo! And my brother!———Shame, ſhame for Carolina—You dare to ſmile—Out of my cloſet, out of my cloſet, or this moment recant———yes——you muſt recant——

Are you mad, Carolina?———

Thank you, my Lord———But tell me, my very wiſe brother, why, ſpite of the *bon-ton*, you dare to think well of the

the Engliſh? Can they ſing, dance, or perform, like the ſprightly inhabitants of the South? Were not this really the caſe, ſhould we be ſuch fools as to pay twenty times as much for diverſions we can find at home?———What have you to anſwer?———Are we indeed ſuch fools? Pray ſpeak, my Lord———

We are, Carolina.——

We are!———And you are not yet out of my ſight!———

You are not then of my opinion, ſiſter?———

Of your opinion!——Since you will not favour me with an immediate retreat, I'll take a book, and ſpeak no more.———

Whence that contempt, Carolina, when lately you had ſo high an opinion of our Engliſh performers?———

I, my Lord!—you miſtake—A Lady of taſte and faſhion!———

So, with a ſplendid fortune, you would employ no native?———

No——in no way whatever.——

I thought that once Lady Fanfly——

Lady Fanfly!——This is not to be borne———I will play and ſing my favourite air *Fate la Carita*, if you do not march off.———

Well, do: I'll liſten with the greateſt pleaſure.———

Will you really?———

I will indeed.———

And you think to betray me to your opinion by a fawning compliment?—

My opinion! I never believed you differed from me.—

Such another word, and I am to the harpſichord.—

Let me lead you to it—

And

And you would have me play?—

Certainly.—

I'll pleaſe you then, my Lord.—— Pray—what tune ?—Where's your collection of Mary-bone and Vauxhall ſongs ?—Which of them.——

His Lordſhip could ſtand it no longer, he burſt into laughter, and retired crying, What a girl ! what a girl !—Remember your commands.

LETTER XIX.

The ſame to the ſame.

MOST of the company had already come when Lord Pelerſton entered the room. I beheld him, Victoria, without a ſwimming head, or an aching heart. He preſented me with a roſe: I ſmiled, made a fine curtſy, and put it in my boſom.

Had you ſeen how the man's eyes ſparkled with joy at the diſtinguiſhed honour I paid his flower, how he looked whenever I ſmelt it, you would have complimented me for making ſuch a noble uſe of a trifle.

Why ſhould we not ſet off a nothing to its beſt advantage when it may fill a lover's breaſt with pleaſure, without diſcovering our real ſentiment?

"Caro-

" Carolina! Lovers are ſo eager after the leaſt ſhadow of a promiſing poſſibility——ſo diligently watchful of a motion or a look"———

Well, Victoria, what then?——

" Only that Lord Pelerſton eaſily read in your countenance how generous you was, and that's a *bagatelle* you know. What could he infer from your peculiar attention to his flower? Nothing at all, to be ſure, men are ſo modeſt, ſo unwilling to be agreeably deceived, ſo averſe to their own happineſs"——

And ſo, Victoria, you think Lord Pelerſton ſaid to himſelf, " this girl loves me," and that to his roſe he is indebted for the daring thought.——I am afraid you are right, for, Lady Preſton ſtealing it out of my boſom, I inconſiderately run after, and recovered it with an emotion I could not ſuppreſs.

Lord

Lord Pelerſton darted at me ſuch a grateful eye———and then coming to me———

How kind you are, Lady Carolina!—

Was not the man very indiſcreet, Victoria?

Oh! my Lord, I am ſo fond of a roſe: it looks ſo gay at this ſeaſon of the year——

And then, turning to my ſeat, I left him to conſider whether he had not miſtaken me.

I was not a little ſtartled at his Lordſhip's preſumption, and concluding that the moſt inſignificant preſent, naturally, becomes of conſequence, when given by

a lover, I inſtantly gave myſelf the look of indifference.

At dinner we had words for reaſon, and ſlander for wit: None outſhone in that eminent French accompliſhment my Lady Courtly, and Lord Fanfly.

I congratulated his Lordſhip upon his unuſual ſprightlineſs, and obligingly complained he had never before favoured me with ſo many *bon mots*.

How ſevere, my Lady! Was I ever different from myſelf? How come I to pleaſe to day?——Is it in compliment to Lady Courtly you are ſo indulgent to me?——

In compliment to me! cryed her Ladyſhip with a ſneer—To yourſelf my Lord, to yourſelf you are indebted for Lady Carolina's

rolina's encomiums on your brilliant *vivacité*, and the delicate *choix* of your expreſſions.—

Madame, vous avez bien de la bonté. 'Tis true I have made the tour of Europe—

C'eſt une belle choſe, my Lord, *que de voïager.* How we improve by it! We talk, move, think ſo wretchedly before we ſet off, but when we return, *qu'on eſt charmant, aimable, & élégant!*----Was you ever at Venice, Lord Pelerſton?

Yes, my Lady.----

Delightful ſpot! I cannot conceive how a young nobleman can think of retiring to the *triſte, enfumé, & abominable* London, after having once enjoyed *les plaiſirs du Carnaval.* This Iſland is the

moſt

moſt ſhocking corner of the globe. Is it not ſo, Lord Fanfly?———

To be ſure, my Lady, to be ſure.

You have been a *Cicisbeo* in Genoa, Lord Pelerſton?—

No, Madam: I never had that honour.———

Not a *Cicisbeo!* unfortunate indeed!— How could you poſſibly ſpend your time?—

I was very buſy, my Lady———

Buſy! *à votre âge*, my Lord! Buſy in Italy——*Cela me paſſe.*———Pray what was you ſo buſy about?——

The ſtudy of manners, policy———

And it was for the manners and policy of a people you had no concern with, that you left England, and was not a *Cicisbeo!* Prodigious upon my honour. Was the ſtudy of mankind of greater moment than the waiting as a *galant ſerviteur* upon a

fine lady in Italy?—Did you ſtudy mankind, Lord Fanfly?—

Mankind, my Lady! Not I indeed—

I thought ſo.——What is that ſtudy good for, Lord Pelham?—Mankind!—

It is a very neceſſary and uſeful ſtudy, my Lady.——

Neceſſary, my Lord!—Pray no more of it; ſince it is neceſſary, it muſt not be agreeable to be explained.———Is it not ſo, Lord Fanfly?———

To be ſure, my Lady, to be ſure.

Lord Pelerſton, your ſnuff-box has ſomething peculiarly ſtriking: will you give me leave to look at it?———how curiouſly deſigned!———how admirably executed!———how charmingly inlaid!———Each part is a beauty——— *et l'enſemble eſt parfait.*———Bought in Paris, no doubt?——

No,

No, my Lady, I had it made in London—

In London!—well——I believe it——Strange how abſent I was!——This Cupid and this arrow want proportion—no *fineſſe* in Venus's ſmile——the garland is extravagantly loaded——what confuſion in the colouring!——no part is finiſhed——*l'enſemble eſt deteſtable*——Shall we go to cards, Lady Pelham?——

As you pleaſe, my Lady——

I thought, ſaid Lord Pelerſton, as he led me out of the dining-room, that frivolity and impertinence ſhould never have diſgraced the quality of England—Unhappy land, where honour and diſcretion are no longer eſteemed but by a few!——And you could eſcape the fatal contagion, amiable Carolina!——You

could glory in reaſon and virtue, though graced with wit and beauty—

Leſs partiality, my Lord.——Believe me, though opinion commands the manners of ladies of faſhion, it has no influence on their hearts——

Generous Lady Carolina!——How worthy of being admired!——How—how I love you!——

Come, Carolina, ſaid Lady Preſton, let us have ſome muſic.——

With all my heart.——

Lady Pelham that minute calling Lord Pelerſton, Carolina tript to her cloſet, followed by the "how I love you!"

I ſat

I ſat directly to the hapſichord, but the " how I love you !"

How you play, Carolina! are you not aſhamed ?——Come——to it again——you don't accompany me——I cannot ſing.——

Could I help it, Victoria ! Did he not ſay, " how I love you !"—Bewitching words !—Preſton, am I right ?—

Not quite——ſo ſo—now you are—What is the matter with you, Carolina ?—wrong again.—

Ah ! Did he not ſay " how I love you !"

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LETTER XX.

Lady VICTORIA NEVIL to Lady CAROLINA PELHAM.

THough every line of yours, Carolina, ſhould be for the future filled with invectives againſt Mr. Froſby, rely on my forgiveneſs. I will ſmile at the lively ſtrokes, and admire your wit.

Never tire when you tell me, I muſt ceaſe to love him———muſt ceaſe!—It is already done, Carolina, believe me, I love him no more.

Why ſhould I?——Has he not invited me to hate him?——has he not beſpoke my contempt by his behaviour?——has he not wantonly trifled with my peace, by forcing into my heart paſſions I never knew before?———What had I to do with

with anger and hatred, when ſo charmed with his love and my own?———Was he to inſpire me with them, Carolina, and to be their firſt object? Could not he be pleaſed without rendering me miſerable?———

I am ſuch a ſtranger to the new gueſts which have intruded into my heart, that I ſincerely wiſh they would depart. Their language is quite unintelligible to me.—Alas! was I to learn it from Froſby?---From Froſby!———Ah, Carolina, could you have thought it?

How often has he not ſworn at my feet, he would love me for ever!——— Nay, even yeſterday he had the very look, the very countenance, as the firſt day in which he declared his paſſion. He was cautious of diſpleaſing, and fearful to

offend.———Modeſty, love, and diſcretion, were beautifully blended in his air and manners.———Never was he ſo loving, ſo amiable, ſo delicately attentive.———I gloried in my lover, happy in his virtues, conſcious of his love, and my power over him!—It was a dream, Carolina———a dream from which he this morning awaked me.----How I hate him!---Why did he draw off the veil that concealed him from me, when the full view was to be ſo unfavourable and deſtructive!---Never would I have attempted to free myſelf from the enchanting error, ſo charmingly was I entertained with it.------Delightful deception! and Froſby has deſtroyed it!---How I hate him!

I never thought Froſby could be unjuſt--Is not injuſtice a vice, and the character

of a baſe ſoul?---Oh, Carolina! My pen drops from my fingers-----I muſt take breath.

Froſby unjuſt!-----ſo low and contemptible!---and I love him!---No, no, Carolina, I love him no more---I will have no foible which reaſon can upbraid me with.

Fatal knowledge!---One vice is linked to hundreds.---When we bluſh not for one, are not others ready to follow at the firſt call of paſſion?---One ſtep from virtue----my head ſwims---my heart is torn---I will write no more.

I have wandered by myſelf through the garden and the little park, and though I carefully avoided every place that could recall the idea of Froſby, I ſaid, here

he

he ſtole a kiſs, and was forgiven—there he preſented me a flower which he would himſelf have put in my boſom, had I not ſnatched it from him—in this place he ſpoke of love, and I liſtened to him ——in that, I anſwered his ſighs, and told I loved.——Oh, Carolina! Then—then, he was worthy of me.———I will forget he ever ſpoke——I ever liſtened.—

I can neither ſit nor walk.———Alas! how painful to hate!——Was my heart, my tender heart to feel that torment! ——Victoria, to hate!——Froſby to be hated!———I am diſtracted!———Deteſt love, Carolina, deteſt it, never think of it, fear the miſchievous God: the pains he cauſes are unſpeakable and not to be borne.———Avoid, miſtruſt, liſten not to Lord Pelerſton—like Froſby, he may talk deceit—look

ſoftneſs

ſoftneſs———ſmile thy ſoul into the belief he loves thee———Solitude adds to my dejection, and enlivens my ſorrow———Yeſterday, ſo happy———to-day, ſo wretched———What a ſad change in a few hours!———Unjuſt, ungrateful Froſby!——How great his remorſe, if he love and repents!——How miſerable has his indiſcretion made me!———How many tears! Can he ever expiate for them!——In what eſteem I held him!———Oh! I love him no more———I hate him.

If he loves and repents!———Carolina, I'll relent—I'll pity him———If he feels but the half of my vexation, he muſt be pitied.———How could he ſupport the horrors which will follow his return to reaſon———his return to love——his conviction of having offended.———Shall

I be mercileſs?—I mercileſs!—Oh! Carolina, Carolina!——

I was reading your laſt letter when Froſby came in.

A letter from Lady Carolina?

Yes, Sir.—

Will you favour me with a peruſal of it?——

I was ſurpriſed at his curioſity, and ſighed a negative.

I am very likely concerned in it,—

You are not, Sir.——

If ſo, would you refuſe to ſhew it me?—

Does Mr. Frosby doubt my word?—

My Lady——can you have any ſecrets which I may not know?—

My ſecrets are yours—would you have me betray thoſe of Lady Carolina?—

Mighty ſecrets, to be ſure, ſince I am not to be truſted with them!——And you prefer your friend to me, my Lady?—

Would

Would not you deſpiſe me, Sir, were to ſacrifice my honour to your curiosity?

Could you heſitate, did I require it? ——Am I to hold the ſecond rank in your heart—Lady Carolina to have the firſt! —Convince me ſhe has it not by delivering me that letter.—

I refuſed—he inſiſted, till at laſt, vexed to the ſoul, I reproached him with his indiſcretion. Then, Carolina, he turned pale with anger, and flung out of the room exclaiming, "And I thought ſhe "loved me! great God! and I thought "ſhe loved me!"——Is not ſuch behaviour monſtrous?—And I would love him! ——No, no. I love him no more—I hate him. Adieu.

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LETTER XXI.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

NOTHING could be more welcome to me, than to hear of Frosby's caprice: surely the man has read my wishes, and I thank him for his seasonable impertinence.

What a difference between your first letters and the last! Should I have perused it five times over, but for the unexpected vivacity and passion with which it is written?——Thy anger against Frosby is quite a rarity to me.——

"Can you jest, Carolina, when I am so "distressed."

Jest! to be sure. Why art thou so diverting

diverting in thy ſorrow, ſo lively in thy expreſſion of it?————My compliments to Mr. Froſby: tell him he is my favourite, and that if he continues ſo charmingly ſmart, I ſhall certainly take a trip to Cumberland, to enliſt him under my colours.

You love him no more?—Did you not write you loved him no more?—Well, out of friendſhip, I'll take him from you—It were a pity his heart ſhould not be engaged.—Give him a hint of my good will, Victoria, and fail not to be ſteady in your, "I love him no more."

"Carolina! have you not already "Lord Fanfly, and Lord Pelerſton? "What need of Froſby?"—

Never mind it, Victoria, I'll manage them all.—And then, is it nothing to free my Victoria from a troubleſome lover?

What

What would you think, were I to refuſe my aſſiſtance when ſo neceſſary to your peace and happineſs?—No more compliments, Victoria, no more compliments, force Froſby from Brenton-hall by a careleſs look, and a *witty* converſation, and ſend him to me—if you cannot wait my coming for him myſelf.

" I am afraid, Carolina, you would " have too much upon your hands."—

You are afraid!—and ſo you will keep him, though " you love him no more." Have I loſt my Victoria?--my Victoria, who once wrote me, " how unjuſt to perſuade " a man he is loved when we love him " not! how baſe the pride that glo- " ries in deceit!"——You ſmile, ſweet Victoria, then this is not your caſe, and by your words, " I love him no more,"

I muſt underſtand he is dearer and dearer to you.—

" How fooliſhly you talk, Caro-
" lina!"

Is it thus Victoria ſhows her gratitude to her Carolina?—How fooliſhly I talk! Muſt I have a ſhare in your diſpleaſure againſt Froſby? A fine return, indeed, for my generous offer to take him off your hands!——I dare ſay you would have me write, that Frosby was very indiſcreet to aſk a ſight of my letter, and were I to add, he was a fool to inſiſt on what you would not grant, and to leave the room with, " and I thought
" ſhe loved me! great God! and I
" thought ſhe loved me!" Why the fooliſh Carolina, would no doubt be complimented with, " what an amiable
" creature!"

I will not be that amiable creature, firſt, for the pleaſure your letter gave me.—

"Very odd, Carolina, very odd."

Be it ſo. Secondly, for the kindneſs of Frosby in favouring you with an opportunity of knowing him.

When ſo ſevere upon the foibles of men you "love not," why ſo unconcerned about thoſe of the only man you "do love?" Is not my Victoria's happineſs to depend upon Frosby's character? Muſt my ſenſible friend diſcard reaſon, and obey but love? Is Frosby to be all perfection? Would he were, Victoria, but he is a man—his curioſity is an inſignificant whim, though it has cauſed you ſo much ſorrow.——But as it may be a beginning to more important diſcoveries, let it not be ſlighted: Victoria

toria has too much diſcernment not to make a proper uſe of it.——

Let not your judgment be guided by your heart, when you think of Frosby, but let it be always ſo when you write to Carolina. Adieu.

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LETTER XXII.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

WHAT degree of folly may a man be brought to by a woman whom he loves—by whom he is deteſted? Lord Charles is the man I intend to raiſe to that height of honour, if he ſtill perſiſts in tormenting me.

Tired of telling him he could never pleaſe me, I yeſterday aſſured him, twenty times that I hated him. The wretch laughed, turned upon his heel, mimicked my anger, went away, came back,

ack, confidently ſwore he loved—and as abſolutely reſolved not to believe me, after a ſide glance he had ventured at the glaſs.

Upon my ſeverely reflecting on the ridicule of his pride, he had the impertinence to proteſt I ſhould be his, ſince no man would ever be tempted to love me—Will you know, Victoria, the reaſon he gave?——Why——" I was 'haughty, imperious, and too fond 'of being courted, though I hated 'the lover."

Lord Charles truſts to my father's will, and my ſeeming indifference! Though he has often met Lord Pelerſton here, it never yet entered his head, I had a heart, and that his Lordſhip might deſerve it!

I

I really think I could love Lord Pelerſton out of ſpite, was I not already inclined to love him for himſelf. Two rivals, of diſpoſitions ſo different, muſt needs ſtrike, one with pleaſure, the other with diſguſt——No ſenſations can ever be ſo rapidly felt——Oh, Victoria! that fool, that fool, what ſhall I do with him?——

I was alone yeſterday in the library, reclined on a ſopha, and muſing upon a book, when Lord Pelerſton came in—How my heart did beat!—

Riſe not, my Lady——

How ſoft was his voice!

Am I not to fear my company ſhall deprive you of a more agreeable amuſement?—

ment?———You was reading———muſt I go?———may I ſtay?———

I am glad to ſee you, my Lord, and Lady Pelham will be here preſently—

Charming Carolina———

How paſſionately he looked!—

I do—

Was your lordſhip at court this morning?—

I broke off the "I do," it ſo frightened me.

No, my Lady. I knew you was not there, and—

Then

Then, Victoria, the unwelcome Lord Fanfly ruſhed in—Oh! that fool, that fool, what ſhall I do with him?—

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LETTER XXIII.

Sir JOHN MODISH to Lord PELHAM.

I Had been ten minutes on my way to White-haven, on a buſineſs of importance, when the truſty DUVAL, riding full ſpeed, called the poſtilions to ſtop, flew to me, and with an exulting air, whiſpered that Froſby had not been ſeen yeſterday at Brenton-hall, and that Lady Victoria appeared uneaſy and chagrined. Ever ready to catch at the ſmalleſt hope of a rupture between Victoria and Froſby, and love being the moſt important buſineſs of my life, I inſtantly ordered the horſes back, and drove to Brenton-hall.

I am glad to ſee you, Baronet, ſaid Mrs. Brenton, preſenting me her hand.

We were quite alone: your company i a favour,——

You make me happy, Madam, in e teeming it ſo——Would Lady Victoria no think it diſagreeable——

Why ſhould I, when my aunt is pleaſe with it?——

No more ceremonies: let us ſit down.—

How does Mr. Froſby, Madam?——

Was I not very ungenerous, Frede rick?——

A half ſigh eſcaped the charming creature.

You know not, Frederick, how enga ging a beautiful woman is when languo and anxiety are diffuſed over her counte nance, and with what ſenſibility a tende

hear

ear partakes of her ſorrow. I could ardly, at that ſigh, refrain from exclaiming againſt the wretch who cauſed it. How t went to my ſoul to ſee my Victoria abſent nd diſturbed!—I was ſo moved, that though Mrs. Brenton was, at dinner, equally gay nd entertaining, I had it not in my ower to put on a chearful look.

Where has Sir John left his vivacity?——

Forgive, Madam, but——I am not happy.——

How ſilly, how imprudent my anſwer, Frederick! But blunders are the wit of lovers.

Theſe words ſeemed to ſurpriſe and awake Lady Victoria. She caſt on me a paſſionate eye, and Mrs. Brenton helped me to a bumper.

Drink, Sir John, drink your melancholy away; it does not become your age.——

From that inſtant, Lady Victoria ſeemed leſs penſive and dejected: but, ſpite of her endeavours to diſſemble her inward vexation, a bluſh now and then informed me ſhe thought, felt, and was unhappy.

How far was ſhe from diſcovering the true cauſe of my concern! What would I not have given for the preſence of Froſby, to have her reſtored to her former tranquillity!——I wiſhed for that man, Frederick, I wiſhed for that man, though every expreſſion of his—though every look of hers had pierced my heart. I deteſted myſelf for having come in hopes of a quarrel between the lovers, and would, with pleaſure, have laid down my life at the feet of

Victoria

Victoria, to expiate the criminal expectation.

10 o'Clock.

What errors, Frederick, was I not led into by youth and folly, when I took appetite for love, and caprice for ſentiment!——How different the paſſion that now chains my fierce tranſports, and makes me ſhudder at the thought of having been unjuſt to the amiable and virtuous object of my adoration!——Heavenly girl! never will I offend thee more—She muſt not know, Frederick, how much I love her—it would be a torment to her to ſee me miſerable—let me ſave her generoſity the feeling of my pains—What a hard taſk!—How to diſſemble!——Shall imperious love remain tamely on my tongue!—I am afraid, Frederick, my

heart ſhall break in the conflict—but, ſo the peace of my Victoria be undiſturbed, it matters not what becomes of mine.

You ſhall ſee my tulips, Sir John, ſaid Mrs. Brenton, as ſhe left the dining room: their variety will divert you.

Flowers are my favourite amuſement.—Can a courtier think there is any pleaſure in cultivating them, and that a country life may be enlivened by the innocent diverſion?——

Life, Madam, is only enjoyed in the country—I really believe we vegetate in town.——

Already in the ſpleen! ſure you are not in earneſt?——

I am, my Lady, I am indeed. High life is a brilliant ſtage profuſely decorated with coſtly toys, where vanity, intereſt, and

and folly, play the firſt parts at the expence of reaſon and nature. Our heads only are at work, in ſearch of novelty and variety, while our hearts feel the horrors of vacuity in the midſt of diſſipation.——

Few pleaſures, and no real happineſs, are to be met with in a faſhionable life—There I never found the agreeable hours I have ſpent at Brenton-hall——But, dear Madam, let us go to the tulips.——

Mrs. Brenton ſmiled, and ſhaking her head, Sir John! Sir John!—

Pray, Madam, let us go to the tulips, and offering my hand I led her to the garden, not daring to ſteal a glance at Lady Victoria.

Did I not ſay too much Frederick? I was aſhamed of my indiſcretion though

of no moment———My heart was ſo full———how could I keep ſilent?

1 o'Clock.

No flowers paſſed unobſerved: every one was analyſed and commended by Mrs. Brenton, and both ladies were not a little diverted at my repeated blunders—for truly I knew nothing of tulips.

Lady Victoria laughed ſo heartily, that ſeizing her hand——

I'll be revenged, my Lady——and I printed my lips upon it. Sweet kiſs!——let me not remember it, or I am undone.

As

As I knew Mrs. Brenton was extremely fond of muſic, I propoſed to ſend for Lady Victoria's harp, and retire to the bower at the end of the *parterre*.

A good thought, Sir John.——Send for your harp, Victoria.——

The harp was brought. We went to the bower, and ſitting oppoſite to Victoria, for I would enjoy every poſſible charm, I was inſpired by her divine touch, and the melodious ſound, with all the tenderneſs with which I ſung the cantata of APOLLO and DAPHNE.

Lady Victoria ſo feelingly expreſſed the complaints of the God, that loſt in raptures, I acted my part——I forget myſelf—Excuſe, Frederick. To me the moſt trifling word, or action of Victoria, is a ſource of delights. Let me expatiate up-

on each grace, each ſmile, each motion.———Oh! had I no love to combat———Help me, Frederick, to conquer my inclination—Inclination!—how weak the word!——Set my paſſion in its true light——Tell me 'tis impoſſible to pleaſe—tell me that Froſby——no——be ſilent. Adieu.

Modiſh hall—176—

L E T-

LETTER XXIV.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

THIS day looked ſo raviſhingly tempting, after a week of rainy weather, that Lady Pelham was eaſily perſuaded by Lord Pelerſton, and Sir James Parker, to take an airing in Kenſington Gardens. Our converſation was at firſt general, but upon my expreſſing a curioſity to know an exotick ſhrub, and Lord Pelerſton offering to ſatisfy it, we were left a few ſteps behind.

This ſhrub, Madam grows between the tropicks; it——amiable Carolina let me not loſe this opportunity of confirming to you what my eyes, my behaviour,

naviour, my faltering words, and broken ſighs, have ſo often told you.—No man ever loved with equal paſſion and ſincerity.

Your moſt humble ſervant, my Lord.—

And I dropped a low courtſy.

Is this you analyſis of the ſhrub?—I thank you for your complaiſance, and am no longer curious.—

Stay, my Lady, ſtay——forgive my telling I love you—'tis the firſt time I have felt the power of beauty—none but Lady Carolina—

And ſo you fancy, my Lord, that Lady Carolina deſerves to be complimented with your firſt raillery?——

Make me not the moſt miſerable of men—talk me not into a hatred of myſelf——ſpare the diſdainful look.——

How ſhall I look, my Lord? Muſt I ſmile, and receive your gallantry with a grate-

a grateful ſenſibility? Speak—I will not have you be the moſt miſerable of men.—

Cruel Carolina!——

Cruel, when I conſider you to command my air and countenance!——Cruel, when ſo generous!——

How dear I pay for having ſeen you!—To love, and to be deſpiſed!—Wretched Pelerſton!——

Upon my word you act charmingly, my Lord, and of all things I like the "Wretched Pelerſton!"——As a party is now forming among the *beau monde*, to perform a few plays, I wiſh you would join them.——'Tis unkind, my Lord, to bury ſuch conſpicuous talents: I ſhould not be the laſt to admire, and do you juſtice.——

And the pains I endure are a ſubject of mirth to Lady Carolina! She can delight in adding to them by an inhuman

ſneer!

ſincere!——She laughs at the vexations ſhe cauſes!——

Pray go on, my Lord, I am ſo fond of the pathetic——a few more moving exclamations, and—you enchant me.——

So unmercifully gay!——

So artfully dejected!——

Artfully dejected, Lady Carolina!—Can you think that perfidy is in my heart——that my tongue can diſſemble?——

No, no, my Lord. You are ſincere, to be ſure.——

I have juſt a notion——your irony is feigned, you love me.——

I love you! That's a good thought, my Lord, againſt being "the moſt miſerable of men."—How happy you are in your ideas! I am glad, however, you found it not ſooner, for then I ſhould have been deprived of the "wretched

"Pelerſton!"

"Pelerſton!" that affected me ſo much.——I thank you for the ſeaſonable diſcovery,—I was at ſuch a loſs how to conſole you———

Be good, charming Carolina; ceaſe to banter, and frankly own you love me.———

What need of it, my Lord?——Will your imagination fail for a word?——Can't it help you to the idea I pronounced it?———

Can you refuſe me your heart, Lady Carolina?——

How ſhould I, when you aſk for it?———

Could you have a heart, and not give it to the enamoured Pelerſton?———

No, no, to be ſure.———

And we joined Lady Pelham.

Pretty indeed, was I obliged to return ſigh for ſigh, and love for love, to every daring

daring, idle-fellow, who is pleaſed to honour me with a declaration; and prettier ſtill, was I to ſingle out one, and diſcard all the reſt!

To preſume I muſt "love him" becauſe he "loves me!" But will not the ſame reaſon do for his rivals? And ſhall your Carolina be unjuſt to twenty, or love them all at once?—The man is ſurely out of his ſenſes, or has a mighty opinion of himſelf.

"He loves me with ſuch a paſſion." Did I deſire him to do ſo?—"Carolina "has a heart."——What then? Muſt it ſurrender at the firſt ſummons of his Lordſhip?——Did you ever hear of ſuch aſſurance, Victoria?——

"How could the loving Carolina "be

"be ſo extremely politic, and unſin-
"cere?"———

Experience, ſweet girl, has taught me to miſtruſt my eyes, my ears, and even the approbation of my heart. If we loſe ſight of reaſon, paſſion will take the lead, and hurry us into every extravagance prepoſſeſſion is prone to. To let a man in high life know our affection for him, is viſibly the genuine offspring of folly. I will therefore keep behind the veil of ſeeming indifference, that I may not err in my judgment of the man who ſhall have the power of making me happy or miſerable.

So many unfortunate examples at Court, in London, all over England, warn me to be prudent. Sincerity with a Froſby may occaſion no grief, but in this depraved ſpot, we cannot take too much

precaution

precaution againſt the vanity of men, and the inſidious foibles of our hearts.——

" And my Carolina thinks, ſhe will keep ſuch a ſtrict guard on herſelf as not to be underſtood?"——

Underſtood! that is a trifle, Victoria. I give Lord Pelerſton leave to underſtand me, but let him never be certain he does, till I am pleaſed to convince him of it.——

" If at laſt Lord Pelerſton proves " undeſerving of my Carolina, or out of " deſpair carries his incenſe to another " ſhrine"—

Well Victoria, I'll ſeek for another lover—that's all.—

" And Carolina's reaſon will have ſuch a power over her inclinations?"—

Self-love, Victoria, ſelf-love will come to my aid, and my heart ſhall be free. My rank procures me innumerable reſources

ſources againſt a too ſerious engagement. So many diverſions employ both my head and my heart, that I cannot poſſibly fix long upon the ſame thought.

Carolina is not to be chained by a look, or a declaration.——She will prepare againſt the ſtorm, and provide for every contingent. Adieu.

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LET.

LETTER XXV.

Lady VICTORIA NEVIL to Lady CAROLINA PELHAM.

I Tell thee, Carolina, thou loveſt not.—Thy ſoul, though tender by nature, and animated by fancy, is not tuned to the moving notes of love.———Cold as deformity, there are no raptures in thy words, no fire on thy tongue, no pantings in thy boſom.———Lord Pelerſton is the choice of thy taſte———not of thy heart——Him thou preferreſt to thy other admirers, as we do wit to ſtupidity, and modeſty to aſſurance———He is not the man nature formed for thee———Thou canſt reaſon!—I tell thee, Carolina, thou loveſt not.

Ah!

Ah !———Would I were as indifferent !——What an evil is ſenſibility, that fatal ſpring of our miſeries, when exquiſitely affected by paſſion !

A nothing is torment to a lover——A doubt may make us languiſh under all the racks of fear and deſpair, and a thoughtleſs ſmile on a rival drive us to madneſs. Many times have I ſuffered the extremity of ſorrow for a look, which expreſſed not an anſwer to my feelings—Oh, Carolina !—thou dreſſeſt to pleaſe—thou talkeſt to be admired—thou art ſtill gay and eaſy——I tell thee, thou loveſt not. Adieu.—

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LET-

LETTER XXVI.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

THROW away any thing that you may be buſy about, Victoria, and ſhould even Frolby be on his knee recanting, and crying for mercy, do not ſpare him: turn him out I ſay, and liſten to me.

Lord Fanſly had been above twenty minutes in my cloſet, without my having taken the leaſt notice of him, and I was barbarouſly playing, and ſinging the Babes of the Wood, to force him out of my ſight—

Can

Can you be ſo intent upon your harpſichord, Lady Carolina, while I am here?—

My Lord, you are not fond of muſic this morning; but, may be, I play ill! Do I?——

I do not ſay ſo neither: you play well enough.

Well enough, Victoria!—

I beg your Lordſhip will give me a tune or two, that I may improve, for I am ambitious of attaining perfection.—

You ſtand in no need of me for that, Lady Carolina.—

For what then, my Lord, do I ſtand in need of you?—

You aſtoniſh me: did I ſay you did?—

Plays

Pray, my Lord, be not over polite: tell me wherein I fail; which is the fault I muſt mend?—

You will make me mad, Lady Carolina.———

Then he roſe up, and took ſuch long, noiſy ſtrides, that I deſired him to ſit down, for he made my head ache—

'Tis very odd that I cannot pleaſe you.———

You think it very odd, my Lord?—

To be ſure, my Lady. After two years conſtant attendance, not to be more advanced than I am in your affection, is not that very odd?

What qualities did you rely upon to pleaſe me, my Lord?———

What qualities, Madam!———What qualities!———

He

He reddened, and his eyes flaſhed with indignation.—

Are you in earneſt?—Am I to incur your contempt for loving you? Where is my crime?—"What qualities!" That's very ſtrange---Had I neither natural nor acquired ones, muſt I be deſpiſed and ridiculed for the want of them?—I thought Lady Carolina choſe fitter objects for her mirth.—

My Lord, as you have ſhewn *ſome* ſenſe in your anſwer, I wiſh you would never put yourſelf any more to the ſame trouble on my account. Ceaſe to plague me with your love, and you no longer ſhall complain of my ſatire.——

Plague you! what an expreſſion!—Is it new to you, my Lord?—Muſt I tell you again, and again, that I hate you?

Is there ſuch a pleaſure in being told ſo, that you will expoſe yourſelf every day to the repetition of it?——

And you really hate me?—

How you talk, my Lord! Did you ever doubt it?—

The tendereſt lover!—

The moſt tedious!—

Could I ſuſpect I had a rival—

What then, my Lord?—

He ſtarted up in a paſſion, and ſtaring wildly at me—

I would rather die an hundred deaths than let—no: no body ſo long as I live ſhall poſſeſs—Carolina, Carolina! do not make me frantic—throw me not into deſpair.—Forgive, forgive if I have offended—forbid me not to love you—ſay but you do not hate me.——

And

And the man, Victoria, was at my feet, preſſing my hands, and bathing them with tears.—

This ſituation, my Lord, does not become you; riſe, be compoſed, and let me have no more of theſe new fits of paſſion, if you would not have me avoid you for ever.——

So coolly inſulting!—

Sit down, lord Charles, and et us reaſon. Did I ever give you any hopes of pleaſing me? Did I deceitfully encourage you to love me? If not, what have you to reproach me with? Why do you perſiſt in loving, when convinced of my unalterable indifference?

Oh, Carolina! how little are you acquainted with the ſenſibility of my heart, and the violence of the paſſion you inſpire!—

Though ſure, Carolina, beyond all doubt, of your hatred and contempt, could pride conquer the enchanting delight of loving you?—I do not wiſh it might.—Let me love you, let me wear for ever the chains you gave—deprive me not of that ſatisfaction—let me hope your heart may ſtill be mine.———

How eloquent love rendered him, Victoria! He had ſuch a dejected countenance, ſuch an air of deſpondency, that I felt ſome pity; and had it not been baſe to diſſemble my diſlike, I ſhould have left him in his pleaſing error.——

My heart cannot be yours, my Lord; accuſe me not of cruelty, and ſtrive to forget me.——

To forget you, Lady Carolina!—

Yes: let me intreat you to forget me, and to ſeek for happineſs where it may be beſtowed

beſtowed upon you. How many ladies, more deſerving of you, would liſten to your vows, and reward your conſtancy!—

Talk not to me of another love, dear Carolina.—Send me not in purſuit of an imaginary bliſs, when the reality is only to be found with you.—

Why that obſtinacy, when you know I can never love you? Do not deceive yourſelf, my Lord: I tell you, ſincerely, I can never love you. Change, my Lord, change—call me unjuſt, and ungrateful; ſeek in ſociety a diverſion to your love; fly my very ſteps; ſee me with horror; hate me, and be no longer a ſlave to a blind and hopeleſs paſſion.—

How cruel your counſel, Lady Carolina! how miſerable it makes me!—My heart bleeds at the thought of it—Abuſe not the empire my paſſion has given you over

me—To change!—to hate!—to be reſtored to my liberty!—How is it poſſible, when I even delight in my ſufferings? Aſk not that ſacrifice, dear Carolina, or aſk my life with it.—Your indifference muſt ſubſide one day—my pains will melt you into ſoftneſs—

No, never: depend on it, my Lord.—Tear me from your heart, ſuppreſs your paſſion, and ſee me no more.—Rob me not of my tranquillity by your declarations, your complaints, and your hopes.—

Lady Preſton coming in that minute, I was happily relieved.

Are you not ſurpriſed, Victoria, at the infatuation of the man, and his manner of expreſſing himſelf?—How ſhall I keep him from me?——Can love elevate an ordinary

ıary ſoul, and inſpire it with ſuch un-
mmon fire?—Did he not ſpeak with de-
acy, and threaten with fierceneſs?—
is paſſion begins to terrify me—Dear
ctoria, what ſhall I do? Adviſe, charm-
ȝ girl, ad viſe——Should he ſuſpect
ɔrd Pelerſton——I will not think of it.

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LETTER XXVII.

The ſame to the ſame.

BE not afraid, Victoria, that your Carolina will turn a coquet. Of all the ridiculous characters which women attempt to aſſume, that ſurely is the leaſt adapted to reaſon, and delicacy of ſentiment. Though I treat with ſo much levity the man I love, accuſe me not of a real propenſity to be unjuſt and unſincere.

You do not approve of my reſerve to Lord Pelerſton: "it may betray "him into the belief I am falſe and un- "generous, or humble him into the "certainty, that I have a very ſlight o- "pinion of his morals and character."

Your ingenuity, Victoria, though admired

nired by me, would do no honour to your diſcernment, was you living any where but at Brenton-hall. Judging of every heart by your own, you would be expoſed to perpetual miſtakes. Every hour of the day would bring a new occaſion for wonder, and the exclamations, "is it ſo!—is it "poſſible!" And at laſt my Victoria, unwilling to diſgrace herſelf by a borrowed air, would return to Cumberland, or faſhion her expreſſions and countenance, were ſhe to ſtay in London.

Gallantry having ſtolen the look and garb of love, and chaſed him from polite circles, every man thinks it inconſiſtent with manners, and good breeding, not to compliment a Lady with the tender of his heart; and to ſuch perfection is carried the "mimicked ſenſibility," that

can hardly be diſtinguiſhed from a real one.

Rank, diſcretion, and virtue, can not free us from theſe UNFEELING actors of SENTIMENT; they wait upon us with a tender look, an unwearied attention, and an air of ſadneſs, inſeparable from a true paſſion: but as they only act, the deluſion vaniſhes long before their part is over.

Some there are ſo fluſhed with pride and ambition, as to diſdain to attack, but where the ſtrongeſt reſiſtance is to be expected. They feign ſo admirably, they are ſuch maſterly adepts in the art of pleaſing, that a young lady, unleſs guarded by the fear of a miſtake, and a firm prepoſſeſſion againſt them, might

might very eaſily be deceived by the artful inſpirers.

Virtue, dear Victoria, virtue would make a very poor defence againſt a cool and ſkilful lover, ever watching over his prey, and ready to ſeize upon the leaſt advantage, which a *raiſed emotion, an eye ſwimming with languor, the ſudden colouring of a cheek, the unuſual panting of a boſom, a faint repulſe, or a faltering voice can furniſh him with*, had ſhe no ſuſpicion of the tempter's falſehood and perfidy.

How dangerous to believe!—how imprudent not to fly!

The dangers attending ingenuity are too great not to frighten a woman's weak and tender ſoul; that amiable quality may appear amongſt friends, but muſt

must always be diſcarded in the preſence of a lover.

Vivacity and careleſſneſs are better arms, and oftener crowned with ſucceſs. A man, uncertain of the impreſſion he has made, keeps within the limits of decency and reſpect: the fear of diſpleaſing, ſets bounds to his knaviſh flatteries, and wiſhed-for familiarity: he is a ſlave, fettered by an indifferent mien, and ſeeming neglect, when a loving look would, at once, give him both liberty and power over his miſtreſs.

I believe Lord Peterſton has honour and humanity.—What then? Have not all mankind the ſame character in appearance? Who dares openly to deviate from the air of probity?——Who can ſee into the inmoſt receſſes of the heart?—

How

How dexterouſly intriguing——how boldly unprincipled are the generality of our modern lovers! What laws do they not violate for the enjoyment of their criminal deſires! What conſiderations do they not laugh at, and deſpiſe?——How many too credulous women—Write no more of ingenuity, Victoria. Keep that phantom at Brenton-hall; raiſe altars to its honour, and may you never repent of the homage you pay it!

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LET

LETTER XXVIII.

Sir JOHN MODISH to Lord PELHAM.

YOU wonder how I can languiſh away my days in fruitleſs ſighs, when Pleaſure, the generous friend of youth and beauty, would ſmile on my wound, and heal it, infallibly heal it, in London! Ceaſe to wonder, Frederick—I love.—Let theſe words, "I love" juſtify me to thy reaſon—to thy reaſon! Canſt thou underſtand the language of my heart, and not call impertinence the charming ſallies of nature?—Unhappy man! I pity thee, and ſcorn thy haughty reaſon!

Thy

Thy apathy is poiſon to thy life—thou art in a perpetual death, though thou numbereſt thy days—Languid as a *modern play*, thy ſoul has not one flight which I can admire, or extol.

All my ſenſes, enlivened by paſſion, are loſt in the delights of a bewitching error, and thine——To be born!—and not feel!———What malignant ſpirit curſed thee with that fatal indifference?—Thou art free from the pains of ſenſibility!——Does that advantage compenſate for pleaſures thou enjoyeſt not?

The ſight of Lady Victoria, for ten minutes, Frederick—for five minutes only, chaſes ſorrow from my heart, melts me into raptures, and gives life to the tedious hours I paſs without her.—When ſhe talks, I interpret her civility into regard, her expreſſion

preſſion into ſentiment, the ſoftneſs of her voice into love.—I argue every motion in my favour; and if I touch her hand, ſmell the ſame flower, water her favourite tulip, or ſing a ſong ſhe likes, I laugh at thee, at Froſby, at all the world—I am then wholly wrapt up in happineſs and the oblivion of my miſery.—Shouldſt thou aſk what charms ſuch ſenſations can have, I anſwer thee *love*, for too faint is the tongue of man to attempt the deſcription of them.

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LET-

LETTER XXIX.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

IN ſpite of all my precautions to avoid a *tête à tête* with Lord Pelerſton, he ſeized a critical minute, in which I had no company but my Canary bird. He trod ſo cloſe on the ſteps of Lucy, that I had no time to contrive a pretext for not receiving him.

To be revenged, however, of his too haſty appearance, I aſſumed a half-diſcontented air.——

I ſee, my Lord, you have attained a great proficiency in the French manners,

by

by being at once both a viſiter, and your own *introducteur*.——

I ſhall plead guilty, if love, that made me an intruder, obtains not my pardon from Lady Carolina.——

Don't juſtify one indiſcretion by another, my Lord; the attempt would be ridiculous and vain: am I to forgive, when the excuſe adds to the fault?——

'Tis not in me that the fault lies, Madam: I ſee it in your eyes; 'tis from them it proceeds. Had you leſs beauty to ſubdue—leſs wit to attract, you would not complain of me.—

And 'tis *extempore* you make theſe pretty compliments, my Lord! 'Tis a pity to loſe them upon me, for they are really charming. I beg you will reſerve your vivacity, and eloquence, for more important occaſions———Are you for the

the court, or the oppoſition, Lord Peterſton?——

How he ſtared, Victoria, at the unexpected queſtion!——

I am for neither, my Lady: ſo long as we are ruled by the beſt of princes, there will be no reaſon for a difference of intereſt.——

What then is meant by an oppoſition?——

Very little more than——

But would not the world laugh, were they to know I am ſpeaking politics to the amiable Carolina?——How ridiculous ſhould I appear!——The happieſt moments of my life conſecrated to any thing elſe, but Lady Carolina!——And I am in love!——And I adore you!——

Nobly expreſſed, upon my word. I admire your facility and preſence of mind,

mind. How came you by it, my Lord?———

I'll tell you, my Lady.——

He roſe up, and taking my hand, led me to a pier-glaſs.———

How! is it to that glaſs, my Lord, you are indebted for your amazing ſprightlineſs?———

'Tis not to the glaſs, but to thoſe features, that ſhape, thoſe lovely eyes, and that graceful countenance, which you ſee in yourſelf.———

Mighty pretty indeed.———Well, I ſhould never have gueſſed that. Tell me, my Lord, is this gallantry your own, or an importation from the continent? If your own, I beg you will put it in faſhion—the manner is ſo new—Why did not you favour me with it before?———

I could almoſt wiſh, Madam, I had never been forced to diſcover it.——

Since you repent, my Lord, the benefit is yours again; take it back, I will forget I ever had it.——

Lady Carolina, cannot you be ſerious?——

Would you have me ſerious when you do your utmoſt to divert me? I am not ungrateful, my Lord; my gaiety is a proper acknowledgment for your efforts to amuſe me.——

I have wandered over France, Italy and Spain; I have ſeen, I have converſed with witty and beautiful women—— never was I tempted to love.——I ſee Lady Carolina at the play, and my heart, my, till then, faithful heart leaves me, and I am unhappy. O! Carolina, Carolina!——

Do

Do not mind me, my Lord; go on with your ſoliloquy.——

How pleaſing your chearfulneſs, Lady Carolina, were I free!—How much more delightful now, if the effect of a mutual, unreſerved inclination!——

Of all the men, who do Lady Pelham and me the honour of a viſit, none is more entertaining, or more welcome, than Lord Pelerſton.——No thanks, my Lord, I am ſincere: but I wiſh you would now and then give your converſation another turn. Raillery, however excellent, ceaſes to pleaſe when we don't know how, and where to drop it.—

Raillery!—Why miſtruſt my honour? Is Lady Carolina to be entertained with ſentiments ſhe does not inſpire? Are not her rank and virtues a defence againſt falſehood and gallantry? Is not her beauty a ſure arm againſt hypocriſy? Who could tell

her

her of love, and not feel it?——You are abſent, charming Carolina——out of a generous pity liſten——tell me I may hope———

Yes, my Lord, you may hope—not to diſpleaſe by diſcontinuing a diſcourſe I chuſe not to hear.——

Was not my reply very heroic, Victoria, when my heart beat ſo ſtrongly in his favour, that I could hardly diſſemble its indiſcreet motion? Poor Lord Pelerſton! how chagrined and dejected!—A tear ſtarted———I ſaw it.———how dangerous that tear, Victoria! I turned my head, and riſing up, went to the window, and truſted to the wind a ſmothered ſigh.———Then reſuming my former ſpirits, I came back to my chair.

Lord

Lord Pelerſton ſeemed loſt in thought, but ſtarting as I drew near him—

I ſhould be very ſorry, was my paſſion to give any uneaſineſs to Lady Carolina.—Forget I ſpoke—I will ſpeak no more.—You will not forbid me to ſee you, my Lady?———

I am not ſuch an enemy to my ſelf, my Lord, as to wiſh to be deprived of your company. My Lady Pelham honours and eſteems you.———

Oh! would Carolina but return my love, how happy ſhould I be in Lady Pelham's regard! It were my utmoſt ambition to be eſteemed by her, and Lord Pelham.———

This declaration, Victoria, I thought worthy of a reward, ſo throwing careleſsly my hand between our two chairs, I gave him an opportunity to lay hold of it, and raiſe it to his mouth.——

Pray,

Pray, my Lord———

Always ſevere, Carolina!———

Always forgetful, my Lord!——

How I adore you!——

And he fell on his knees.———

By all that is dear to me, I adore you.———

Have you not, juſt now, given me your word, my Lord.———

I am with You, can I remember it?—

Fearing that my ſilly heart would at laſt ſoften me into attention, I changed the converſation, and kept it on ſo many different topics, that notwithſtanding all his endeavours to get it back on the favourite one, I heard no more of the fooliſh god of love.

Lord Pelerſton ſaw well enough he did not diſpleaſe, and I dare ſay went home pretty well ſatisfied that the gay Carolina was not inſenſible.—I will never encourage a *tête à tête.* An hundred ideas, which diſturb us not in company, crowd into our heads when alone with a lover, and may reverſe the firmeſt reſolution. The neceſſity of giving a lie to one's heart, is a conſtraint not to be endured. Add to it the indiſcreet attention, and the yet more indiſcreet ſighs, troubles, and agitations, of a man we love—That Lucy, how I will ſcold her!

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LET-

LETTER XXX.

Sir JOHN MODISH to Lord PELHAM.

WHEN thou ſpeakeſt, Frederick, in the houſe, I admire thee:—when, in the benevolence of thy heart, thou helpeſt the friendleſs man of honour, I commend thee: but when thy pen writes of love, as thou art then no longer my ſenſible Frederick, I heartily laugh at the ſhadow thou offereſt me of thyſelf. Thou art in *love* what Alexander was in *painting*—a mere dunce to be ridiculed by a feeling boy of fifteen.

Thou wouldſt have me, ſince I chuſe not to leave Cumberland, ſpirit away my paſſion for Victoria, with the lively Miſs Elliſon.——Wilt thou never remember that I love, and that a great beauty

t

without as great virtues, cannot affect my heart?—The hand of Miſs Elliſon I wiſh not—her ruin I will not attempt.—I ſhan't have the ill-nature to impoſe a ſigh, a fond expreſſion upon her.—I abhor the faſhionable ſport of undoing virtuous maids—curſes on him who betrays them into infamy.——

Court not, ſayeſt thou, court not Lady Belmour, for 'tis a moſt villanous ſin to ſucceed a fool in the arms of a lady.—Thou art ſurely a wondrous delicate fellow, Frederick: was this law of thine ſtrictly obſerved by mankind, women would not thank thee for having eſtabliſhed it.

Lord Belmour is a fool, 'tis true; but do'ſt thou know what a tempting creature his lady is? Do'ſt thou know, ſhe is all youth, charms, and ſenſibility; and would ſmile thee, even thee, Frederick,

derick, into fierce deſires? Do'ſt thou know ſhe is the life of Cumberland, and that I would queſtion my paſſion for Victoria, were I not dead to the ſeduction of her ſmiles? She only could rival Victoria——ſhe does not—Frederick, keep to thy indifference, but let me love. Adieu.

LETTER XXXI.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

I Will write to you, Victoria, with my uſual ſincerity: expect no mercy from me when thy head rules thy heart, or this takes a flight from the former. Thou haſt been by turns, theſe few days, the ſlave of each, but though it flatters my pride to find my Victoria is not faultleſs, I will furniſh thee with an antidote againſt it.

Paſſions have their degrees, let fools ay what they will, unleſs we are totally deprived of the faculty of reaſoning, by

by ſleep, ſtupidity, or madneſs. Love and hatred riſe, by ſlow progreſſions, to the ſummit of infatuation, and either of theſe paſſions may be rooted from our hearts, when reaſon is warned of their exiſtence by feeling and reflection.

Let a ſentiment be ever ſo pleaſing, it is hourly contradicted by pride, or ſelf-intereſt, which conſtantly point to us diſgrace and ſorrow, the natural effects of a falſe ſtep, and a blind prepoſſeſſion. To ſay that theſe misfortunes are not inherent to every ſentiment, and that mutual love is exempt from them, is to contradict experience. This proves that we are formed of contradictions; that no paſſion whatever keeps long in its meridian; and that it is both poſſible, and probable, we are often deluded by not ſtrictly ſearching our hearts, and granting too

much to nature, and not enough to reaſon.

I know how agreeable it is to be deceived. Deluſion is the life of a ſenſible lover; it takes up his time, his thoughts, and its charms, almoſt realiſed by imagination, are always welcome to his raptured heart. Hence the many overſights and the erroneous credulity which lead to diſappointment and regret.

Human wiſdom, Victoria, has ſeldomer checked ſentiment than ſubmitted to it: 'tis our fate to be ſome times lulled by nature into a forgetfulneſs of the means which eſſentially tend to our own happineſs. When reaſon is thrown into confuſion by the tumultuous ſpirits forcing their way to the head, to fill it only with the idea of a favourite bliſs, it helps not

to

to extinguiſh the fermenting fire, and deliver the ſoul from the violent gales of a tempeſtuous paſſion.

Happineſs is not to be attained by giving a looſe to prejudice. Let us not endeavour to enhance the value of a ſenſation, and add to our ſecurity by a falſe eſteem of the objects before us, leſt we ſhould find the reality fall ſhort of our ſanguine expectation, and be forced into a contempt of ourſelves.

The pleaſure of being beloved, is the higheſt a mortal can enjoy: but as it is not at all times to be ſecured, through the inconſtancy ingrafted in our tempers, I wiſh we could feel it moderately, that we might not be involved in the affliction following an irreparable loſs. In poſſeſſing we ſhould be ever ready to be deprived,

and prepare againſt making ourſelves miſerable for what is not to be retrieved.

2 o'Clock.

Thou, my Victoria, thou ſurely feeleſt that theſe reflections are truly adapted to thy own ſituation, and that I have ſet in their true light the dangers impending on thy paſſion for Froſby.

Soothed in the calm of a full aſſurance of his love, you will not loſe one thought about his indiſcretion; and though he be unjuſt and unreaſonable, he muſt have no failings, ſince their principle is his tenderneſs for you. Unſuſpecting girl! You frighten me. Your candour and ingenuity, will lead you into an imprudent tranquillity

tranquillity of mind, from which if one day forced to arouſe, it will be to paſs immediately to the moſt exquiſite confuſion and anxiety. You will deſpiſe and hate yourſelf for having truſted ſo much to your heart, and the ſeeming good qualities of your lover.

No body would have mankind more perfect than I: but as it is not in my power to adorn every individual with my Victoria's virtues, why ſhould ſhe be a victim to her generoſity? See men as they are, not as you wiſh them to be, and dare to examine the heart of Froſby.

Conſider, Victoria, how naturally men ſlight what comes with eaſe, that the difficulties of pleaſing make them languiſh in

in unſpeakable deſires. They delight in obſtacles, and to remain in ſuſpence.—— I tell thee, art and indifference will command their adoration, whilſt ingenuity and tenderneſs are ſhunned and uncourted. It is a foible we inherit from nature, and Froſby has it in his heart as much as any man in the creation.

Sir John Modiſh's remark, that he would reckon it a prodigy were you both as deeply in love now as you were ſome years ago, is not ſo abſurd. How can we anſwer we ſhall be neither unjuſt nor ungrateful?—

You make love, Victoria, the ſtudy of every day, the buſineſs of every hour, when it ſhould only be a diverſion: you exert your utmoſt ſenſibility to embelliſh it with the gayeſt colours, and never once reflect it is the work of your imagination. Awake not, ſweet girl, from the

the agreeable dream: continue in the loving fit: be for ever loſt to every other idea than that of being beloved.

5 o'Clock.

Does love, once ſettled in the heart, grow too powerful for reſtraint? Can it not be eraſed without tearing a part of it? Are we unable to overcome, and are the efforts of reaſon vain? No, Victoria, they are not vain, though attended with mighty difficulties. What are we to aim at but our own felicity? Shall we be ſatisfied with the ſhadow, when we can attain the reality? What is an hour of rapturous deluſion to years of happineſs? Are we not ſtrengthened by this conſideration, and enabled to triumph, and diſpel the cloud which intercepts the light, and obſcures our underſtanding?——

To

To love, and to be always loved! fine talk, indeed! Set that apart, Victoria, for your dreaming minutes, but let it not be liſtened to, when awake: never flatter yourſelf that Froſby has no fault, becauſe he appears to your faſcinated eyes to have none. He has his ſhare of weakneſs and depravity inſeparable from humanity. Truſt not, Victoria, to the outward form of a man.—I am diſpleaſed at Froſby's proceedings: they ſeem too ſtrongly tainted with injuſtice and tyranny. Be emboldened to judge his behaviour, and the charm that ſurrounds thee will diſſolve. Love him more and more, if he deſerves thee, but hate him in proportion as he may have deceived thee.

Courage, dear girl, ſhake off the yoke of prepoſſeſſion, and let Carolina no longer

longer reproach thee with a ſingle failing. I hate Froſby for having made me diſcover one: yes, thy partiality for him is one, and a very great one.—Poor Sir John!—ſo partial an obſerver againſt him!—Indeed thou deſerveſt not the love he has for thee. Adieu.

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LET.

LETTER XXXII.

Lady VICTORIA NEVIL to Lady CAROLINA PELHAM.

CRUEL friend! Severe Carolina! Spare thy reflections ſo long as my heart is pleaſed in being deceived.——— Why do'ſt thou force thy reaſon on Victoria—on Victoria, unwilling to liſten to thee?

Too few are the days of happineſs—— too many the days of miſery.———Let me then, Carolina, let me enjoy the flattering illuſion—let me be deaf to reaſon, that mortal enemy to love and imagination.

To think! to doubt! to compare! Were it not a folly to put to that teſt the plea-

fures

ſures of love—pleaſures which annihilate every other ſenſation, and entertain the ſoul with perpetual raptures? Felicity is to be felt, not deſcribed———it is loſt when we think.——Carolina! never ſay that Froſby may poſſibly prove unworthy of me.—He loves—he has no fault when he talks of love—my memory is then dead to all paſt injuries.—If he offends, I rave myſelf into hatred of the man—if I ſee ſorrow in his looks, he no longer is guilty—I ſigh and love again.

Brenton-hall——176——

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LETTER XXXIII.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

HE came, Victoria! he came with conqueſt in his looks! he fluttered, ſmiled, and courted, and it was not Carolina, who animated his ſoul, enlivened his eyes, and graced his countenance!—Will you believe it? but why would you not? Is there any other event but Froſby's ingratitude that could ſurpriſe, and render you incredulous? Yes, yes: you will believe the wounds I give are not incurable, and that I may loſe the ſlaves my charms have

have fettered—you will, Victoria? And you dread not my diſpleaſure! You will dare to humble my pride——a woman's pride———her darling paſſion! How preſuming!———Can friendſhip be ſo truly diſintereſted as to forgive when one's beauty, and power are called in queſtion! Loſe a conqueſt!——and I ſhall be told it is poſſible!———Such a conqueſt!—— Have a care, Victoria.

"Who is the audacious mortal who "has fled from my Carolina? Lord "Pelerſton?

No.

"Lord Fanfly?"

Yes: he himſelf is the run-away ſlave: he who was to "turn frantic, to deſpair at every frown of the charming

charming Carolina," has forſaken her, and baſked in another's ſmiles.

It was not enough for him to have mortified me by an unexpected deſertion, he yeſterday paid his devoirs to a young, beautiful widow, the idol of the court, and glory of the age. I had the diſmal ſight of his attention to her, at Lady Preſton's.———

Lord Fanfly had the moſt ſanguine hopes, for he out-did himſelf in being leſs than uſually tedious and impertinent. He ſeldom truſted himſelf out of a monoſyllable, and his great and affecting eloquence was all in aſſiduity, a dying look, and a perpetual ſmile of approbation. He played a few rubbers with Lady Walgrave, and ſat next to her at ſupper. Had the

man

man made choice of a leſs accompliſhed lady in his ambitious attempt to intereſt my vanity, I ſhould have rejoiced at his ſeeming inconſtancy: but by his applying to Lady Walgrave, I loſt all hopes of being delivered from him.

Lady Walgrave is the ſcourge of fools, and her company the beſt choſen in London. I never ſaw wit more happily united with beauty, candour play with a better grace than in her lovely eye. How could Lord Fanfly flatter himſelf with Lady Walgrave's countenance to raiſe my jealouſy? Would ſhe condeſcend to feign a pleaſure which ſhe feels not? how fooliſh his plot when he imagined I ſhould regret him! I laughed at his uncommon preſumption, though heartily vexed he had not ſingled out a lady, who, prompted by

by intereſt, or the honour of a title, would have endeavoured to free me by ſecuring him to herſelf. The man muſt be naturally formed to be wrong with the beſt intention of being right, ſince, even in his revenge, he has not the art of chuſing a proper and infallible weapon.

A letter—from Lord Fanfly—Is not a pen in the hands of a fool a ſatire upon reaſon, Victoria?—What can he write?—Would it were his letter of *congé!*——I'll ſee.

To Lady CAROLINA PELHAM.

In vain have I ſearched this fortnight for a beauty I could love—A heart which has once ſurrendered to Lady Carolina, has no feelings for another—She alone can charm,

charm, enliven tedious uniformity, and ſmile away the troubles of a domeſtic life. How hard my fate!——Dear Carolina, will you ſtill continue inſenſible——ſtill deaf to my ſufferings?——I will adore you with unremitting conſtancy——I will love with ſuch fervour, that you ſhall not have one minute to think on an indifferent object———you ſhall hear but of love—of your beauty—of my tranſports.—My fancy will wander but to divert and pleaſe you. Delay not my happineſs, oh thou my Carolina———ſay but thou wilt not hate—and I am at thy feet—at thy feet ſwearing eternal love———Oh, Carolina! my heart will be in an agony till thou condeſcendeſt to write I am no longer indifferent to thee.—Say but the word, and I am happy.

FANFLY.

Is

Is not this a pretty billet, Victoria?—written by Lord Fanfly! I am amazed—How came he by the lively expreſſion?—Certainly there muſt be two ſouls in that man——he talks——he writes——a wondrous reverſe this—his tongue gave me a diſlike to love—his pen——Lord Pelerlerſton is coming—I hear him—away with Fanfly. Adieu.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.